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# SOCIAL PATHOLOGY

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# SOCIAL PATHOLOGY

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AND

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SEBA ELDRIDGE

*Department of Sociology, University of Kansas*

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# SOCIAL PATHOLOGY

BY  
STUART ALFRED QUINT, PH.D.

DELBERT MARTIN MANN, A.M.

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**DEDICATED TO**  
**STUDENTS AND TEACHERS**  
**WHO REALIZE ALIKE THE USES AND THE**  
**LIMITATIONS OF A TEXT-BOOK**

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Messrs. Queen and Mann have contributed in the present volume an exposition of problems in social pathology, which should be of exceptional interest and importance to students and teachers of the subject. The approach is that of the case-worker confronted by concrete situations which present these problems in a challenging and often-times baffling form. The emphasis throughout is on such problems, rather than on generalized forms and solutions of them. The book is admirably adapted, therefore, to the project method of learning and teaching this subject. By virtue of these and other features, the book is very nearly a model of what a college text should be, and, it may be added, a pioneer exemplar of a type of textbook that is certain to come into vogue in the field of higher education.

S. E.



## PREFACE

There is a large group of problems dealt with in college courses of various names such as "social pathology," "social problems," "control of poverty," etc. But there is no agreement as to the types of problems to be dealt with under these various heads; the field has not been at all carefully defined; often there is no definite viewpoint to lend unity to the course. Among the problems commonly considered are those of widowhood, desertion, old age, neglect of children, unemployment, tuberculosis, feeble-mindedness, etc. Sometimes these problems are approached and handled rather consistently from an economic viewpoint. Sometimes it is psychology that furnishes the touchstone. Frequently such courses are offered by departments of sociology, but unfortunately in these cases it is often true that there is not only no definite sociological interpretation; very commonly there is no particular unifying element of any sort.

Our own purpose is to take certain difficult human situations as they appear on the surface, analyze them into their constituent elements and discuss their significance primarily from the standpoint of sociology. We realize that in so doing we run the risk of producing another "hodge-podge." We appreciate the fact that our chapter headings—unemployment, illegitimacy, divorce, etc.—do not constitute a *classification* of socially pathological conditions. We use them because they represent the point of *contact* with difficult situations. These are the things which appear first. Hence, beginning with them, we seek to point out physical, mental, economic and social factors which may be involved. We undertake to correlate several

viewpoints and techniques, but our emphasis throughout is upon the sociological interpretation.

By this we mean that whether the first indication of trouble be in terms of poverty, of physical or mental health, of vice, or of family breakdown, we are interested in people whose scheme of life has broken down, who do not get on well with their fellows, who have no definition of their social situation on the basis of which they can proceed to deal with it. We are interested in these people not because we look upon them as inferior, not because we think of them as having "character defects," but because in the midst of this rather complex civilization of ours they have lost their way or perhaps have never found it. We think of them as people who face problems of personal adjustment which they for some reason are not able to work out for themselves. Hence, when we call them maladjusted, we do not mean to express moral disapproval, but rather objective description.

What we have tried to produce is a text-book that will be useful for students who have had introductory courses in biology, psychology, economics and sociology, and who may later take specialized and technical courses in such subjects as social case work, neighborhood and community work, criminology, child care and the organization of social work. In the classes for which this book is intended we assume a basic knowledge of the human body and mind, economic organization and social interaction. With this as background, we undertake to show the students what may happen when any of these breaks down. We lead them to consider what may be done to solve the problems which thus appear, but we leave consideration of curative and preventive measures in the main to later courses. We are here concerned primarily with understanding the nature and causes of crises in the lives of individuals and groups.

In the development of this book it is our hope to open up questions for students' consideration rather than to present a summary of accumulated wisdom for them to



absorb. We want to stimulate thinking, additional reading, personal observation and discussion. In presenting what we have to say concerning the various problems dealt with, we make no pretense at completeness. What we are trying to do is to help the students to formulate some of the problems that must be dealt with if people are to live together successfully; to make it plain why these problems are important; to indicate some of the types of evidence essential to their understanding; and to leave the student with the challenge of things not yet accomplished.

Incorporated in each chapter will be found a bibliography and suggestions as to sources of further information. For the present we wish to call attention to certain general sources which may be used in connection with this book as a whole. First of all, there are other general texts such as *Poverty and Dependency* by John L. Gillin, and *Social Problems and Social Policy* by James Ford. A second kind of material of great value is to be found in the proceedings of certain organizations. Easily the most valuable for our purpose are the Proceedings of the *National Conference of Social Work*. Good use may also be made of the publications of state conferences. Others are the *American Association for Labor Legislation*, the *National Conference of Catholic Charities*, the *National Child Labor Committee*, the *National Probation Association*, *National Tuberculosis Association*, and the *National Housing Conference*. There are several important national organizations which do not publish annual proceedings but do have journals, bulletins, etc. Such are the *American Association for Organizing Family Social Work*, *Child Welfare League of America*, *American Child Health Association*, *American Red Cross*. A number of journals will be found very helpful; for example, *The Survey*, *Journal of Social Forces*, *The Family*, and *Mental Hygiene*. More general reference works and guides are the *Readers' Guide*, *Public Affairs Information Service*, *Handbook of Social Resources of the United States* published by the American Red Cross. The *Russell Sage Foundation* publishes bib-

liographies, books and pamphlets that are serviceable in this connection and has an index of agencies that issue more or less regular reports. Besides reports from private agencies, there are public documents that could ill be dispensed with, such as those of the *Federal Children's Bureau*, *Women's Bureau*, *Bureau of Labor Statistics*, *United States Public Health Service*. There are also important data in reports and bulletins of state departments of public welfare, health, labor and industries.

The study of social pathology cannot be confined to any textbook. It is necessary to be continually on the alert for the results of new pieces of research and new ventures in the field of social work. This demands attention to the current literature of the subject and attendance upon conferences of various sorts. In addition there is need for a more direct contact than any reading can provide. The student of social pathology should actually see, with his own eyes, "bad" housing, children in institutions, sick people in hospitals and dispensaries, feeble-minded, blind, deaf, "insane," crippled, homeless, unemployed, etc., etc. We do not advocate "slumming," but do strongly urge supervised observation through cooperation with some of the better social agencies.

Whenever a class in Social Pathology is large, and sometimes even when it is small, we find it advantageous to divide the students into groups of five to seven members. Each group is assigned a project at which it is to work throughout the term. The problems introduced by any of the chapters of this book might constitute such a project. The members of the group pool their funds and purchase for cooperative use not only textbooks, but also supplementary materials in books, magazines and pamphlets. They secure copies of public documents. They visit institutions and offices; they interview persons who may be able to give important information bearing on their project. Under the leadership of one of their own number, they



divide the work, discuss their findings and plan a report to the instructor or to the class. This group work is supervised by the instructor who meets with the students at frequent intervals in addition to the regular class meetings. Thus the students get not merely a bird's-eye view of the field, but a more detailed knowledge of one group of problems. They not only acquire information, but learn how to get it for themselves. They catch a glimpse of social research. They have a little experience in presenting their conclusions and supporting data to other people.

In the attempt so to interpret Social Pathology that it may deserve a place in the field of *social science* we have been much distressed by the attitudes of many students. Some seem drawn to the study by a morbid curiosity as to the "down-and-outs" of society, the "slum-dwellers," the "submerged tenth." They seem positively to *enjoy* reading about misery, vice and crime, or visiting almshouses, hospitals and prisons. They come to the study of social pathology in much the same spirit with which they read the "yellow" journals or gossip about the latest scandal.

Almost as perplexing to the teacher are those sentimental students who want to start right out and do something for "these poor people." They cannot wait to search for the sources of trouble; they must go forth at once with a basket of groceries or take a collection for an orphan asylum. They delight in giving alms, but refuse to examine the fruits of their "philanthropy." They enjoy the sense of superiority which comes from contact, even when it is vicarious, with the "underprivileged." Unless their attitudes change, they will go through life among the "uplifters," instantly ready with programs of "social reform" to meet conditions of whose causes they have not the slightest understanding.

The attitude we are eager to find, or to develop where it is lacking, may perhaps be designated as scientific. We

want our students to have open but not empty minds. We want them to be seriously concerned about the problems of personal and social maladjustment without being either morbid or sentimental. We want them to face these situations frankly, analyze them critically, propose interpretations intelligently and test their interpretations rigorously. When they have taken these steps, then and only then will they be in a position to propose solutions to the problems that perplex society.

In conclusion we wish to give some recognition to the many individuals and organizations whose cooperation has made the preparation of this book possible. We regret that it is impossible to present a complete list. But among those who have rendered definite assistance by giving access to files, preparing data, permitting the reprinting of published materials, reading our manuscript and reading proof are the following—Miss Elsie Bradley, Dr. Frances Sage Bradley, Mr. E. T. Brigham, Miss Mamie Burk, Mrs. Katherine Burnett, Prof. Seba Eldridge, Miss Gertrude L. Farmer, Dr. Harrison L. Harley, Dr. William Healy, Prof. Victor E. Helleberg, Miss Lucy Frances Johnson, Miss Louisa Knake, Mrs. Mary E. MacCosham, Mrs. Lottie McVey, Miss Frances M. Money, Prof. S. H. Prince, Prof. E. B. Reuter, Miss Della Ryan, Mrs. Elizabeth Sears, Prof. E. H. Sutherland, Miss Sharlene L. Sweet, Mr. Graham R. Taylor, Dr. W. I. Thomas, Mr. Paul Wander, Mrs. Eleanor Rowland Wembridge, Mr. Walter W. Whitson, Dr. Frankwood E. Williams, Miss Margaret Woodson. Among the organizations to which we wish to make similar acknowledgment are the following—American Red Cross, Boston City Hospital Department of Social Work, Chicago Vice Commission, Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, Doubleday, Page & Co., Helping Hand Institute of Kansas City, Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency, Judge Baker Foundation, Kansas City Provident Association, Little, Brown &



Co., The Nation, National Child Labor Committee, National Committee for Mental Hygiene, The Survey, Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor, Women's Protective Association of Cleveland. To these and all others who have helped in any way in the making of this book we express our hearty appreciation.

STUART ALFRED QUEEN.  
DELBERT MARTIN MANN.

LAWRENCE, KANSAS,  
*April, 1925.*





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**Part I**

**FAMILY DISORGANIZATION AND  
PERSONAL DEMORALIZATION**





# SOCIAL PATHOLOGY

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## CHAPTER I

### APPROACHES TO AN UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN ILLS

KENNETH MCGREGOR

Kenneth McGregor<sup>1</sup> was a thirteen-year-old boy whose chief trouble viewed superficially seemed to be that he was "too good a mixer." He had talents as a comedian and a lively temper, both of which he displayed at school to better advantage than whatever capacity for learning he possessed. Kenneth's was an impulsive, irresponsible nature: his life was full of ups and downs. He would worry about some prospective punishment while acting in the very way most likely to bring it upon him. Then when he found himself in difficulty he yearned for an opportunity to get clear away from the irritating situation. Kenneth had been in Juvenile Court twice; once at the age of eight for turning in a fire alarm, and again at ten for helping to rob a grocery store.

His father who had long since disappeared from the domestic horizon was known for his continuous drunkenness and utter brutality. When Kenneth was eight months

<sup>1</sup> This is a very brief summary of a narrative from a case record of a Child Guidance Clinic. The original narrative may be found in a little book, *Three Problem Children*, published in 1924 by the Joint Committee on Methods of Preventing Delinquency, 50 East 42nd St., New York.

old his father had struck him over the head with a beer mug. Mrs. McGregor lived in constant fear that Kenneth, who displayed some traits like his father's, would grow up to be like him. She also had the poor judgment to express this fear repeatedly in Kenneth's presence.

The boy's school record was a history of failures. He had been in five different schools in seven years, because his mother moved frequently to escape the father, before the latter disappeared for good. Kenneth had repeated 1A, 2B, 3A, 3B and 4A, and was now repeating 4B. He was known at school as a liar, a petty thief and a truant. At a certain psychiatric clinic he was labeled "a moral imbecile, emotionally unstable." But another examiner rated him simply as a "dull child with inferior intelligence." His Intelligence Quotient was reported to be .81. However, Kenneth showed good mechanical ability and some fine personal traits. He was affectionate, generous and helpful in the home. He never held a grudge and was sorry that he worried his mother.

One source of maladjustment was found to lie in the fact that although he was definitely left-handed, his teachers had compelled him to use his right hand. There is a good deal of evidence to show that this was a primary cause of failure, unhappiness and desire to escape and make a fresh start. Kenneth indulged in masturbation and smoking, but a boys' club leader influenced him to give up both these habits.

Economic difficulties were not in the foreground with the McGregors, yet there were financial problems to be solved. Mrs. McGregor had to work and hence could not give as much time to her boys as she wished. In order to secure an apartment whose rent was within reach, the family had to live in an undesirable neighborhood where Kenneth fell in with a gang of boys who among other things engaged in a series of robberies.

One commentator summarizes Kenneth's case thus. "Not content with giving him an unfortunate father, Fate endows him with genuine left-handedness, sends him to a man who on no valid evidence at all calls him a 'moral



imbecile,' and caps the climax by putting him in a school conducted on factory lines. She makes amends by giving him a good mother and putting him in touch with the Bureau."

Because Mrs. McGregor was a sensible woman, the sources of trouble in the home were readily corrected. It was school adjustments which were hardest to effect. When Kenneth happened to have a teacher who was "an educator and not a factory boss," he did well. But under the ordinary school regime, with its grades, report cards, promotions and other machinery submerging the educational process, he got into trouble. A social worker from the Bureau spent much time trying to find the right school and the right class for Kenneth. She saw that he had the opportunities of a boys' club and summer camp. The evil wrought by holding up Kenneth's older brother as a model was corrected, first, by showing the mother how unwise this was; second, by inducing Kenneth to accept as quite natural his brother's superiority in certain points; third, by getting Kenneth an independent paper route (he had been helping his brother, Walter, with his).

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**Religious and Moral Approaches.**—Many a boy with a record like Kenneth's has been dubbed "incorrigible" and sent to a "reform school." The usual reaction to the aggravating conduct of such a lad is emotional rather than intellectual. It takes the form of calling names rather than seeking to understand. Those who have been annoyed by his misconduct find satisfaction in blaming him for his perversity and demanding that he be punished. This is a form of release for their pent-up feelings. When it is identified with "the wrath of a jealous god," its subjective value is enhanced, and it takes the form of "righteous indignation."

It may very well be, therefore, that explanation in terms of sin is an attempt to rationalize one's emotional outburst against a troublesome member of society. At all events, it has been common from time immemorial to charge a

disturber with offending the deity. By a simple extension of this idea people interpret all sorts of human ills as divinely imposed punishments for the violation of sacred laws. This was the assumption of Jesus' disciples when they asked the Master about the causes of a case of congenital blindness. "And as he passed by, he saw a man blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind?"<sup>2</sup> This same notion is more elaborately set forth in the thirty-seventh Psalm, of which we shall quote only the last verse. "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

We are inclined to doubt the adequacy of this theological explanation and to agree with the clergyman whose comment on the sentence quoted from the Psalmist was, "But I have." Indeed, we have observed people whose piety and moral probity were above reproach, but who nevertheless found themselves in the midst of serious difficulties. Moreover, even when we do find poverty, sickness and ignorance correlated with "incurability," we may properly suspect that, instead of "meanness" being the cause of misfortune, something else may be the cause of both. At least two of Kenneth McGregor's teachers explained his school failure and misconduct as a case of "willfulness and carelessness." Their statement was not fundamentally different from the inference of Jesus' disciples concerning the blind man. But to us this expression is itself evidence of the teachers' failure to understand and hence to deal successfully with Kenneth.

In many children, of whom Kenneth is a fair sample, the irritating behavior which drives teachers and parents to distraction is not due to sheer perversity and original sin, but to a real intellectual and emotional weakness. The importance of this changed interpretation of familiar facts lies in the different approach to the problems which it suggests. For while exhortation and punishment have been the accredited means of dealing with natural depravity, changing conditions to meet unchangeable

<sup>2</sup> John 9: 1-2.



factors in a child's makeup is rapidly becoming the approved method wherever the newer psychological understanding prevails.<sup>3</sup>

In other words, we are not interested in finding fault with Kenneth or the other persons whom we shall describe in the chapters that follow. We are very much concerned in finding what it was that brought about their difficulties and how, if at all, they may be removed. On the other hand, we are not wholly discarding the notion of personal responsibility. We anticipate that very often there will be found conditions which can best be handled by making a person feel that he is master of his own fate and stimulating him to vigorous action on his own behalf. In giving up the conventional moral and religious interpretations of misconduct, poverty, disease, defectiveness, etc., and assuming that the relation of cause and effect is as valid for human behavior as for any other phenomena, we must not forget the objective reality and importance of personal attitudes as active forces in all these situations.

**Biological and Medical Approaches.**—In the story of Kenneth McGregor one of the most interesting and significant parts is his mother's firm belief that he has inherited his undesirable traits from his father, and that he is, therefore, foredoomed to be just like his father. A good many other people have been so impressed with instances of real or apparent heredity that they are prone to regard such a statement as a complete account of the trouble. Others, who recognize clearly that heredity is not "the whole story," nevertheless deem it most important to emphasize the biological inheritance of the individual or group concerned. Among these is Charles B. Davenport of the Eugenics Record Office.

Heredity is often regarded as a terrible fact; that we suffer limitations because of the composition of our germ plasm is a blow to pride and ambition. But, on the other hand, with limitation in capacity goes limitation in responsibility. Those who held the hazy doctrine of freedom of the will must have postulated uniformity of capacity for discriminating between right and

<sup>3</sup> *Three Problem Children*, p. 119.



wrong and uniformity in responsiveness to similar stimuli. Of course such an assumption is false. How we respond to any stimulus depends on the nature of our protoplasm. The nature of the response may be modified by training, by the formation of habits; but the result of training is, within limits, determined by the impressibility of the protoplasm.

. . . The special classes which are the concern of the boards and associations of charities and correction consist of individuals with one or more traits that are more or less disturbing to the social organization. These individuals, or rather their traits—cause a disturbance and an expense of time and money quite out of proportion to their numbers in the community—they seem to be the main hindrance to our social progress. Moreover, their numbers seem to be increasing, hence it is a pressing need of the day to find out what is the cause and cure of defectiveness and delinquency.

The diversity of answers to such inquiry shows the depth of our helplessness. Mental defectiveness is ascribed to malnutrition of the fetus, to asphyxiation of the child during the labor of birth, to adenoids, to infection with venereal disease—despite the fact that (excepting mongolism) it usually occurs only in families with the defect on both sides of the house. Likewise criminality is ascribed to poverty, to bad example, to bad or inadequate education, despite the fact of incorrigibility. Even when there is some relation between the alleged cause and the result one feels that all these explanations are based on the logical error: *post hoc ergo propter hoc*: and that the cart is often put before the mule. There is a more fundamental explanation for these non-social traits than any of those that are usually ascribed. [That explanation is defective inheritance.] <sup>4</sup>

There is no doubt that many people are inclined to overlook the significance of heredity. Hence a strong presentation such as that of Davenport is valuable. Nevertheless it is possible to give our attention too exclusively to heredity. If biological inheritance were the whole, or even the chief, explanation of human misfortune, there would be little to do for those in trouble. There would be no program of amelioration except eugenics. But as we proceed with the study of human maladjustments we shall find many whose difficulties are overcome, in spite of whatever handicap may have been imposed by heredity. We shall find im-

<sup>4</sup> Davenport, Chas. B., *Heredity in Relation to Eugenics*, pp. 260-262.

portant changes wrought in health, in economic status and in personality. Such practical observations predispose us to accept the conclusions of another eminent biologist when he says, "It is not true that what an organism shall become is determined, foreordained, when he gets his supply of chemicals or genes in the germ cells, as the popular writers on eugenics would have us believe. . . . Every individual has many sets of 'innate' or 'hereditary' characters; the conditions under which he develops determine which set he shall bring forth."<sup>5</sup> Hence we accept as our working hypothesis the belief that other factors are at least no less important than heredity. While it is highly desirable to know as accurately as possible the inherited capacity of any individual, it is at least equally essential to know what other factors have helped to make him what he is, because it is these other factors which may be modified.

Among these other factors are some which involve physical health. We shall see later how heart lesions, the tubercle bacillus or the anopheles mosquito may play havoc with human efficiency and happiness. "Half the melancholies and the oppressions and the despairs of life are due to insufficient rest, or an empty stomach, or indigestion."<sup>6</sup> So in the case of Kenneth McGregor the questions were naturally raised: Is this boy suffering from any disease? Is there any acquired physical defect? The findings of the medical examiner were to the effect that on the whole Kenneth was in fairly good condition. There was a slight defect of vision; pubertal development was delayed; tonsils and adenoids had been removed. The one outstanding physical difficulty was enuresis (bed-wetting). Glandular treatment seemed to put a complete end to this trouble. From what we already know about Kenneth it is evident that improvement of his physical condition was helpful in meeting his other difficulties. But it is equally plain that medical treatment and hygiene alone would have done very little to solve the problems of this thirteen-year-old boy. Nevertheless, there are those who undertake to explain

<sup>5</sup> Jennings, H. S., *Heredity and Environment*, Sci. Mo., 19: 233.

<sup>6</sup> de Schweinitz, Karl in *Family*, 5: 197.



human ills in terms of physical health alone, or even of some particular aspect of bodily structure or function. One of the most extreme instances of this is the effort to tell the story of human life in terms of the endocrines or glands of internal secretion.

The life of every individual, in every stage, is dominated largely by his glands of internal secretion. That is, they, as a complex internal messenger and director system, control organ and function, conduct and character. The orderliness of human life, in the sequential march of its episodes, crises, successes and failures, depends, to a large extent, upon their interactions with each other and with the environment.<sup>7</sup>

Innumerable varieties and combinations of interglandular action supply us with the limitless types of adolescent girls. Some endocrine cooperatives that make one girl stable and settled, will make others unstable and unsettled. Alicia may be hyperthyroid, and so excitable, nervous, restless, and subject to palpitation of heart and sleeplessness. Bettine may have too much post-pituitary, and so will menstruate early, tend to be short, blush easily, be sentimentally suggestive and sexually accessible. Christina may be adrenal-cortex centered and so masculinoid: courageous, sporty, mannish in her tastes, aggressive toward her companions. Dorothea may have a balanced thyroid and pituitary and so lead the class as good looking, studious, bright, serene and mature. Florence, who has rather more thyroid than her pituitary can balance, will be bright but flighty, gay but moody, energetic, but not as persevering. And so on and so on.

Environment, habit-formation, training, education serve only to bring out the internal-secretion make-up of the girl, or to suppress and distort and so spoil her. . . .<sup>8</sup>

This statement is so extreme that not many are likely to be misled by it. But, like the extreme emphasis upon heredity, it serves to call attention to factors which are often neglected and whose study promises a rich return. Hence when anyone is in difficulty it is well to discover as much as possible about both his heredity and his present physical condition.

**Psychological and Psychiatric Approaches.**—Additional ways of getting at our problems are suggested by the psychologists and the psychiatrists who stress, of course, the

<sup>7</sup> Berman, Louis, *The Glands Regulating Personality*, p. 110.

<sup>8</sup> Berman, *op. cit.*, p. 150.



mental life. McDougall has undertaken to state almost everything in terms of instincts.

. . . Directly or indirectly the instincts are the prime movers of all human activity; by the conative or impulsive force of some instinct (or of some habit derived from an instinct), every train of thought, however cold and passionless it may seem, is borne along toward its end, and every bodily activity is initiated and sustained. The instinctive impulses determine the ends of all activities and supply the driving power by which all mental activities are sustained; and all the complex intellectual apparatus of the most highly developed mind is but a means towards these ends, is but the instrument by which these impulses seek their satisfactions, while pleasure and pain do but serve to guide them in their choice of the means.<sup>9</sup>

We cannot help wondering just what practical use may be made of this approach. Perhaps McDougall would say that Kenneth McGregor is strongly endowed with the instincts of pugnacity, self-assertion, repulsion, reproduction and gregariousness, but that he is somewhat lacking in the instincts of flight, curiosity, self-abasement, acquisition and construction. Suppose he is—what are we going to do about it? If we accept the instincts as fixed entities, then our program must be one of controlling Kenneth's environment so that his equipment of instinctive tendencies may be utilized to advantage, while he is protected against situations calling for exercise of instincts in which he is lacking or weak. If, however, we regard the instincts as highly modifiable tendencies, our program will be one of stimulating some and repressing others, again through control of the environment. As a matter of fact, all theories of the instincts are being questioned today<sup>10</sup> in ways which make it seem hazardous for us to employ the concept at all. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that we do start out in life with something or other in the way of tendencies to act and that this something or other is a real factor in determining what we do and become later on.

<sup>9</sup> McDougall, Wm., *An Introduction to Social Psychology*, p. 44.

<sup>10</sup> See, for example: Dewey, John, *Human Nature and Conduct*; Faris, Ellsworth, *Are Instincts Data or Hypotheses?* Amer. Jour. Soc., 27: 184-196; Bernard, L. L., *Instinct: A Study in Social Psychology*.

Many of the psychologists today are laying emphasis upon levels of intelligence or native ability. Some of them try to interpret delinquency, poverty, retardation in school, industrial inefficiency, etc., in terms of a low intelligence quotient. One who stresses this point of view is H. H. Goddard.

Stated in its boldest form our thesis is that the chief determiner of human conduct is a unitary mental process which we call intelligence: that this process is conditioned by a nervous mechanism that is inborn: that the degree of efficiency to be attained by that nervous mechanism and the consequent grade of intelligence or mental level for each individual is determined by the kind of chromosomes that come together with the union of the germ cells: that it is but little affected by any later influence except such serious accidents as may destroy part of the mechanism.

As a consequence any attempt at social adjustment which fails to take into account the determining character of the intelligence and its unalterable grade in each individual is illogical and inefficient.<sup>11</sup>

We have seen that at least one person thought the explanation of Kenneth McGregor's school failure and misconduct lay in his low level of native intelligence. Indeed, it is quite possible that this was one of the factors. But Kenneth's relative success when conditions were favorable indicates clearly that his Intelligence Quotient (the ratio of his "mental age," on the Binet scale, to his chronological age) is by no means the most significant element in the understanding of this "problem" boy. In a later chapter we shall examine some evidence which seems to make it quite plain that feeble-mindedness alone does not account for social maladjustment. We shall find demoralized folk whose native ability is of high grade and we shall find feeble-minded folk who are making their way rather well in the world. However, we need to remember that mental deficiency is an element to be reckoned with in many types of maladjustment.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Goddard, H. H., *Human Efficiency and Levels of Intelligence*, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> Goddard himself in other statements indicates that he is in



Another set of specialists, the psychiatrists, is inclined to look for the root of trouble more frequently in mental disease than in inborn mental deficiency. However, none but a few extremists would maintain that everybody who gets into trouble is "insane." What they do hold is that it is essential to consider the mental aspect of every maladjustment; that with every disturbance of social relations there is bound to be a disturbance of one's inner life. "Personality disorder," and less frequently "psychosis," is the psychiatrist's verdict in many cases of crime, alcoholism, drug addiction, prostitution, vagrancy, unemployment, patent medicines, faith cures, etc. A well-known social worker has said that "A majority of social cases are psychiatric problems."

In social case-work we are dealing with individuals in the most intensive manner possible; therefore, we are immediately concerned with the particular variations of each individual. And a very large proportion of persons with whom social workers deal vary sufficiently from the average to present a psychiatric problem, that is, to call for the use of knowledge that is to be had from psychiatry and not from psychology. This fact, that a majority of social cases are psychiatric problems, is probably not yet generally recognized. . . .

A recent review of 50 consecutive applications to the Boston Associated Charities showed 36 individuals in these fifty families who were probably psychopathic, 24 of these were clearly so, and 12 were strongly indicated to be so. In 14 cases the personality of one or more members of the family was not indicated. It is not safe to assume that mental difficulties do not exist when not recorded in social records; so that 36 persons in 50 cases is probably below the true figure.<sup>13</sup>

Modern psychiatry is concerned not merely with those serious disorders commonly lumped together under the head of "insanity," but with mental life in general, with behavior and with personality. It has practically given up the effort to draw a line between the "normal" and the

essential agreement with the proposition that mental capacity is only one, though a very important one, of the factors to be considered in seeking to understand personality or to control conduct.

<sup>13</sup> Jarrett, Mary C., *The Psychiatric Thread Running Through All Social Case-work*, Nat. Conf. Soc. Work, 1919: 588-9.



"abnormal," but devotes itself to an interpretation of human conduct from the standpoint of the mental life. It is in this last sense that psychiatry offers one of the most helpful ways of attacking social problems. Hence it should not surprise the reader to learn that the Bureau which sought to work out the problems of Kenneth McGregor was under the direction of a psychiatrist.

In an admirable paper presented to the National Conference of Social Work in 1920, Dr. Augusta F. Bronner set forth the importance of a well-rounded study of the mental life. She made it plain that such a study must include (1) age-level tests, (2) study of special abilities and disabilities, (3) the functioning of the mind—its dynamic aspect, (4) personality make-up, (5) mental content.<sup>14</sup> She concluded:

Of course these five phases or aspects of mental equipment upon which we have touched overlap and are interrelated in many ways and influence each other. The dynamic and personality qualities are closely related and the mental content is determined in part by these as well as by the mental abilities. In the integrated individual it is difficult to separate them, but for the purpose of analytical and practical study of the individual the five aspects of mental equipment should be kept in mind, and the striking characteristics of each noted.

**Economic Approaches.**—The points of view examined so far have centered our attention upon the persons in trouble—their makeup, physical and mental, hereditary and acquired. We turn now to a consideration of the environment, especially that part of it comprehended by the terms, business, industry, economics. The most consistent use of the economic interpretation has been on the part of those whom it is popular to vilify by such terms as "bolshevik," "radical," "socialist," etc.

Many of the socialists attribute human ills primarily, if not exclusively, to a bad economic system. Their indictment against capitalism is, first, that it is inefficient in the production of material goods. The dominant motif of

<sup>14</sup> Bronner, Augusta F., *Individual Variations in Mental Equipment*, Nat. Conf. Soc. Work, 1920: 351-9.

modern industry is private profit, which is very far from coinciding with social gain. Under its influence natural resources have been exploited; there have been serious wastes from the competition which involves excessive advertising, cross-freights and unnecessary middlemen; adulteration is common; ugliness displaces beauty; and stock manipulation is given more attention than is the production of goods for human consumption. The second count in the indictment of the socialists is that capitalism is destructive of human values. The majority of the population is sunk in "wage slavery," forced to accept dreary, monotonous, exhausting and dangerous work, exposed to disease and accident, threatened with periodic unemployment, and condemned to lifelong poverty. As a result morbidity and mortality rates are high, morale is broken, and vice is rampant.<sup>15</sup>

When we have bound the laborer fast to his wheel, when we have practically excluded the average man from every real chance of improving his condition, when we have virtually denied to him the means of sharing in the higher feelings and larger sympathies of the cultured race; when we have shortened his life in our service, stunted his growth in our factories, racked him with unnecessary disease by our exactions, tortured his soul with that worst of all pains, the fear of poverty, condemned his wife and children to sicken and die before his eyes, in spite of his own perpetual round of toil—then we are aggrieved that he often loses hope, gambles for the windfall that is denied to his industry, attempts to drown his cares in vice, passes into that evil circle where vice begets poverty and poverty intensifies vice, until Society unrelentingly stamps him out as vermin. Thereupon we lay the flattering unction to our souls that it was his own fault, that he had his chance, and we preach to his fellows thrift, and temperance, prudence and virtue, but always industry, the industry of others that keeps the industrial machine in motion, so that we can still enjoy the opportunity of taxing it.<sup>16</sup>

But it is not alone the socialists and others in the labor movement who talk chiefly in terms of economics. The great bulk of private "charity" and of public "relief" has been directed toward the "poor," "paupers" and "in-

<sup>15</sup> Skelton, O. D., *Socialism: A Critical Analysis*, Chap. II.

<sup>16</sup> Webb, Sidney, *English Progress Towards Democracy*, Fabian Tract No. 15, p. 7. Quoted by Skelton, *op. cit.*, p. 39.



digents." From the days of the ancient Hebrew prophets to those of the modern "community chest" men have been urged to give "alms" to the "poor." Particularly is this emphasis upon the financial troubles of mankind found in the history of the English "Poor Law" and its American imitations. The literature of social work has until very recently laid chief stress upon the problems of the "dependent classes."<sup>17</sup>

**Sociological Approaches.**<sup>18</sup>—While the economic aspects of Kenneth McGregor's life seemed to involve no special difficulties, there were very definite problems of adjustment to his social environment, that is, to other people. There were some minor troubles between Kenneth and his older brother. Part of Kenneth's misconduct may be traceable to the absence of a father's influence. But most important of all the factors was the friction that developed between Kenneth and his teachers. In other words, it was important to consider not only his probable heredity, his

<sup>17</sup> See, for example: Warner, Amos G., *American Charities*; Devine, Edward T., *The Principles of Relief*; Henderson, Charles R., *Modern Methods of Charity*; Gillin, John L., *Poverty and Dependency*; Watson, Frank D., *The Charity Organization Movement in the United States*.

<sup>18</sup> In view of the disagreement as to what Sociology is and whether, indeed, there be any such thing, it seems necessary to set forth briefly what we mean by this term. There are some who would make of Sociology a *scientia scientiarum*, gathering together the findings of all the sciences as they relate to human welfare. Others, having discovered the difficulties of creating a super-science, are content to apply the term Sociology to the "left-overs" from economics, psychology, etc. Our own conception differs from both of these. We mean by Sociology the study of human interrelations, "collective behavior," the way people stimulate and react to one another, how they act together, their competition, conflicts, accommodations and assimilation, the institutions and the total cultures which are produced by human interaction. Social Pathology, then, is to us a study of disturbed human relations, unresolved conflicts, failures to effect accommodations or assimilation, malfunctioning institutions, disintegrated groups and demoralized persons. For further statements of this viewpoint see: Thomas, W. I., and Znaniecki, F., *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, especially volumes 4 and 5; Park, R. E., and Burgess, E. W., *An Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, especially p. 560 ff.; Cooley, C. H., *Social Organization*, especially Chaps. 26, 30-33; Lindeman, E. C., *What Is Maladjustment?* Survey, 51: 189-190.



physical health, his level of intelligence and mental life in general, but also, and in this case especially, to approach his difficulties from the standpoint of his relations to other people.

Speaking generally, sociological interpretations of human ills may be stated in terms of "crisis," "unadjustment," "maladjustment," "demoralization," and "disorganization." By *crisis* we do not mean necessarily a great catastrophe, but any serious disturbance of habit (in the individual) or custom (in the group). Such an interruption of the ordinary run of affairs may be occasioned by sickness, accident, unexpected loss of money, property or job, death of a member of the family, betrayal of confidence by a friend, migration, change of party or church or occupation. Now during the time one is trying to find a way to deal with the new situation or to restore the *status quo ante* he has to give thought to matters which ordinarily would "take care of themselves." He is puzzled and perplexed. He tries, imaginatively or overtly, now this scheme, now that. He is *unadjusted*.

Now most of us manage somehow or other to meet most of the crises of life. Our period of unadjustment is relatively short in the majority of instances. We proceed with our work and play and all but forget the troubles we have encountered. But once in a while one of us fails to straighten out his difficulties. In the course of a long struggle he not only finds no solution to his immediate problem, but loses his "nerve." He is less able to meet new crises as they arise. Such a person is *maladjusted*. Discouraged by repeated failures he finally reaches the condition which we describe as *demoralized*.

What makes all this of significance for sociology is the fact that no one, whether in trouble or out of it, lives unto himself. Every one of us is a member of various groups such as family, neighborhood, community, lodge, church, trade union or professional society. Whatever interrupts the smooth running of my personal affairs alters the rôle which I play in one or more of my groups. Likewise, whatever disturbs the life of a group interferes with the

personal life of its members. Hence every one of our problems, as in the case of Kenneth McGregor, needs to be studied not only from the standpoints of heredity, health, mentality and finance, but also with reference to the human relationships involved.

Consider, for example, a man who loses his job and in spite of persistent effort is unable to find another. His being out of work may cause physical impairment, loss of clothing and tools, discouragement and a sense of inferiority. He may become detached from his group of fellow-workmen. In the search for a new job he may have to leave his family. He may lose the habit as well as the physical capacity for regular employment. He may presently come to identify himself with the unemployed and the unemployable, accepting the standards of those who work little or not at all. Here is a problem not merely of economics, but of personal attitudes and social relationships.

The intimate relation between personal demoralization and social disorganization has been simply and clearly stated by Professor Cooley.

We are dependent for moral health upon intimate association with a group of some sort, usually consisting of our family, neighbors and other friends. It is the interchange of ideas and feelings with this group and a constant sense of its opinions that makes standards of right and wrong seem real to us. We may not wholly adopt its judgments, or that of any member of it, but the social interplay is necessary to keep the higher processes of the mind in action at all. Now it is the general effect of social displacement to tear us away more or less completely from such groups. When we move to town or go to another country, or get into a different social class, or adopt ideas that alienate us from our former associates, it is not at all certain that we shall form new relations equally intimate and cogent with the old. A common result, therefore, is a partial moral isolation and atrophy of the moral sense. If the causes of change are at all general we may have great populations made up largely of such displaced units, a kind of "anarchy of spirits" among whom there is no ethics or settled system of moral life at all, only a confused outbreak of impulses, better or worse.<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Cooley, Chas. H., *The Social Process*, pp. 180-181.



Thomas and Znaniecki indicate that personal demoralization and group disorganization do not necessarily go together. An individual person may become detached from his group or may "go all to pieces," not without some effect on his group, but without damaging it irreparably. On the other hand, a group may break up in such fashion that the members, or most of them, succeed in forming new attachments.

[Social disorganization is defined as] a decrease of the influence of existing rules of behavior upon individual members of the group. This decrease may present innumerable degrees, ranging from a single break of some particular rule by one individual up to a general decay of all the institutions of the group. Now social disorganization in this sense has no unequivocal connection whatever with individual disorganization, which consists in a decrease of the individual's ability to organize his whole life for the efficient, progressive and continuous realization of his fundamental interests. An individual who breaks some or even most of the social rules prevailing in his group may indeed do this because he is losing the minimum capacity of life-organization required by social conformism; but he may also reject the schemes of behavior imposed by his milieu because they hinder him in reaching a more efficient and more comprehensive life-organization. . . .

Social disorganization is not an exceptional phenomenon limited to certain periods or certain societies; some of it is found always and everywhere, since always and everywhere there are individual cases of breaking social rules, cases which exercise some disorganizing influence on group institutions and, if not counteracted, are apt to multiply and to lead to a complete decay of the latter. But during periods of social stability this continuous incipient disorganization is continuously neutralized by such activities of the group as reinforce with the help of social sanctions the power of existing rules. The stability of group institutions is thus simply a dynamic equilibrium of processes of disorganization and *reorganization*. This equilibrium is disturbed when processes of disorganization can no longer be checked by any attempts to reinforce the existing rules. A period of prevalent disorganization follows, which may lead to a complete dissolution of the group. More usually, however, it is counteracted and stopped before it reaches this limit by a new process of reorganization which in this case does not consist in a mere reinforcement of the decaying organization, but in a production of new schemes of behavior and new institutions better adapted to the changed demands of the group; we call this production of new schemes

and institutions *social reconstruction*. Social reconstruction is possible only because, and in so far as, during the period of social disorganization a part at least of the members of the group have not become individually disorganized, but, on the contrary, have been working toward a new and more efficient personal life-organization and have expressed a part at least of the constructive tendencies implied in their individual activities in an effort to produce new social institutions.<sup>20</sup>

**Correlation of the Various Approaches.**—It should be apparent by this time that no one of the various approaches is itself sufficient for an understanding of the troubles of any person or group. It is also strongly suggested that for effective dealing with human problems use must be made of all these approaches. As a matter of fact, in working out the difficulties of Kenneth McGregor, use was made of the biological, medical, psychological, psychiatric, economic and sociological techniques and interpretations. It happened that in this particular case attention was centered chiefly upon the psychiatric and social, but relatively little upon the biological and economic. Taking the field of social work in general, we seem to see a growing emphasis upon the psychiatric aspects and a tendency to neglect the economic. Perhaps this is well, for until recently the situation has been reversed. But it is likely that a well-balanced profession of social work will use all of these approaches to the full, varying the emphasis with the demonstrated needs of particular persons and groups. In the chapters which follow we shall undertake to co-ordinate these various aspects of our problems, but we shall frankly put our main emphasis on the sociological,<sup>21</sup> not because we underrate the others, but because this is the phase in which we are especially interested and for which we hold ourselves especially responsible.

<sup>20</sup> Thomas, W. I., and Znaniecki, Florian, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 4: 2-4.

<sup>21</sup> The reader is reminded again that some writers would apply the term sociological to the *coordination* of the various viewpoints and techniques. This definition certainly has the support of widespread usage. But we prefer for many reasons to restrict the term sociological to the narrower meaning, pertaining to human interrelations.



## CHAPTER II

### WIDOWHOOD

#### MRS. JENKINS AND HER CHILDREN<sup>1</sup>

Several winters ago a telephone call from a neighbor to the Family Welfare Society told of the recent death of Mr. Jenkins from injuries in an accident. Neighbors and church had been helping the family for ten days, but could not meet all the needs. A visitor was sent the same day to the home of Mrs. Jenkins, which was found to be a five-room house scantily furnished but in a fairly good neighborhood. She learned that Mr. Jenkins had been caught in a fly-wheel and fatally injured. The shock of his death coming soon after the whole family had had influenza was almost more than Mrs. Jenkins could bear.

Mr. Jenkins had been earning from \$30 to \$35 a week as painter and "engineer," which was not a large income for a family of six. He carried no insurance, but Mrs. Jenkins had taken out \$100 with an undertaking company which might have covered the funeral expenses, but for some reason the company allowed only \$50.

For several months Edwin, aged 3, had been having convulsions. He had always been fretful and cried a great deal. His mother was nervous and had very little control over him. The three older children seemed to be all right.

The house in which the Jenkins were living had been condemned; they were paying no rent, but had some under-

<sup>1</sup> This is one of a number of case summaries which we have prepared from the original records of social case work agencies. These records are obviously of a highly confidential nature. Hence we have changed all names and modified or eliminated other identifying data. At the same time we have tried to include in our narrative all the more important and typical facts. In its essentials our account differs little, if at all, from the original record.

standing about keeping the place in repair. The water pipes had frozen and the toilet leaked. A plumber estimated that it would cost \$60 to make the necessary repairs. In addition, the roof leaked in two places so that it was impossible to use the two upstairs rooms.

On the occasion of the first visit the social worker noted that the furniture was scanty and cheap. On subsequent visits she repeatedly found the house in great disorder. In the winter Mrs. Jenkins would build a very hot fire and then fail to close the damper, so that much of the heat went up the chimney. In other ways, too, she seemed not to be a good housekeeper.

*Mr. Jenkins*, a man of limited education, had lived in the city most of his life, and so far as can be learned had supported his family regularly and to the best of his ability. Apparently he did not have very much confidence in his wife's business ability, for he seems to have kept financial matters entirely in his own hands. Perhaps he had been brought up to emphasize the husband's prerogatives as "head of the house." Some aspects of Mrs. Jenkins' personality lead us to suspect that he was domineering. On the other hand, the quiet poise of two of the children which stands in so great contrast with their mother's talkativeness and instability, suggests that he may have been a quiet but firm man.

*Mrs. Jenkins.*—As time passed and the social workers had more and more to do with Mrs. Jenkins, she puzzled them a great deal and exasperated them at times. However, as their understanding of her increased, the irritation decreased. Mrs. Jenkins showed plainly the lack of business experience and inability to manage her financial affairs. For example, she had borrowed \$25 at 10 per cent, and seemed not to appreciate an opportunity to pay this off with a similar amount loaned without interest. When asked to keep accounts she was unable to make them balance or explain where the money went. When asked about her plans she said she was not planning at all, just simply drifting along, letting each day take care of itself.

Over and over again Mrs. Jenkins gave the impression



of being unstable and erratic. Thus, after her husband's death, when an attorney offered to handle her case free of charge, she first accepted his services and then summarily discharged him, because she "had been told so many ugly little things about him." In the matter of positions she was hard to please. In June work was secured for her with a clothing company. She worked four days and quit, complaining that she lost considerable time on account of not having material to work with. In July another place was secured, this time with a dairy company, answering the phone and waiting on customers. Six weeks later the social worker learned from a neighbor that Mrs. Jenkins was working for a novelty company. Similar instability was displayed in the matters of moving to another house, taking the children to clinic or hospital and leaving the youngest child at a day nursery.

"Unreasonable" and "resentful" are probably the severest terms that might be applied to Mrs. Jenkins. Perhaps "oversensitive" and "not well poised" would be more accurate. Possibly she had what the psychoanalysts call an "inferiority complex." No matter what was done for her, she almost invariably had complaints to make. At one time she was very much insulted because coal was sent out in the name of Lizzie Jenkins—her first name was Elizabeth. Tiring of the staple groceries which she usually received, she bought in May strawberries, new potatoes, green beans, honey and canned peaches, saying she "felt it was very unfair to expect her to live on so little and to make a fuss because she wanted to buy things which her family would eat." Another time, while receiving an allowance from the Family Welfare Society, she refused to tell whether she had paid the current month's rent, saying the social worker should phone the landlord as the Society always checked up her statements anyway! If the coal was sent, she complained that it was "nearly all slack"; if shoes, they "blistered the children's feet"; if a straw hat, it was "too dirty." She objected to letting the older boy join the Boy Scouts because they "stayed out so late at night"; her boys "didn't need it"; there was "not any-

thing that she could not teach them herself"; she was afraid "they might get into bad company." Yet she allowed them to sell papers and use the money to go to the movies by themselves. Of course all this is in one aspect a perfectly legitimate and laudable desire to be independent. (Social workers are often too willing to keep their clients "under their wing.") This may have been a reaction against the repression Mrs. Jenkins experienced while her husband was living. It may be that she never recovered from the shock of her husband's death. Possibly she never was well poised.

Other events shed further light on her personality. Thus the visitor arranged for Virginia Jenkins to care for a neighbor's baby in the afternoons, thus supplementing the family's income. But her mother flatly refused to let the girl do this and said that she was "perfectly capable of managing her own affairs"—which is unfortunately just what she was not. Such things as this led the social workers to describe Mrs. Jenkins as "uncooperative." She was also quarrelsome at times and seemed to think that people were conspiring against her because she was poor. One of her employers said that she made "peculiar remarks," and another even described her as "rather off in the head."

There were four *children*, a girl, aged 12, and boys aged 11, 8, and 3 at the time of their father's death.

*Virginia* was a nice looking, well mannered and unusually bright girl. She was, however, timid and self-conscious, and sensitive about accepting invitations from her school and Sunday-School friends, largely because she was ashamed to entertain them in her home. Another reason undoubtedly was the fact that she had lost the thumb of her left hand. But the principal problem in her case was how to continue in school and secure the education for which she was so evidently qualified.

*William*, the oldest boy, was not progressing well in school. He was listless and seemed to lack energy. At the age of 13 he had reached only the fifth grade, and the teacher reported that he was very slow. He worked at various times as office boy in a bank, delivery boy for a



grocery and carried papers. He was invited to the Y. M. C. A. and his mother encouraged him to go; but when he heard there was an instructor for swimming, he refused to go, because he was "afraid the instructor would be cross to him." William also showed a curious reticence about his father's death. Someone at church asked about his father, and he replied, "Oh, he works." William was circumcised at the age of 13. The next year he was not well; his mother reported the diagnosis to be "starvation," by which she probably meant "malnutrition."

*Harry*, the second boy, got along much better in school. Three years after our record begins his hand was badly cut in an electric washer; and about this time he was suspected of stealing a fountain pen and an electric motor. Neither of the boys had proper supervision, and they seemed especially to need direction in their recreation. Later, Harry joined the Boy Scouts on his own initiative.

*Edwin*, the youngest child, presented more serious problems. From the age of two he suffered from convulsions which were never adequately explained, but which seemed to have some connection with his diet. As stated before, he was fretful and cried a great deal, was alternately pampered and scolded. He was what some people call a "conduct problem." One day he followed his mother to the grocery store and then refused to go home with her. The grocer thinking to help the mother in persuading the child to accompany her, put Edwin into the refrigerator, which gave him such a fright that a convulsion followed. Once when the visitor was at the house Edwin was very disorderly, opening some dresser drawers and throwing a box around the floor. Although he presented many of the symptoms of epilepsy, the physicians have never made this diagnosis but always put the emphasis on his diet. Perhaps Mrs. Jenkins' nervousness was "reflected" in the child. His convulsions may have been simply a reaction to his mother's explosive temperament and erratic behavior.

*Relatives.*—Mrs. Jenkins' father lived in another state. He was a neat but easy-going old man, with no regular employment; "hanging around" a real estate office, making

an occasional sale and getting a commission. His wife took in washing. Mrs. Jenkins' two unmarried brothers, both unskilled laborers, were living with their parents. Neither received large wages and the younger was almost constantly under a doctor's care. Mrs. Jenkins' sister married a blind piano tuner who hired a small boy to lead him around. One brother had not been heard from for years. The fourth brother, holding a good position in a city several hundred miles away, had a wife and three children.

Mr. Jenkins' sister, Mrs. Adamson, married a carpenter who was now getting old and did not have regular work. Mrs. Adamson, who was very hard of hearing, did sewing to help meet expenses. She lived in the city and occasionally visited Mrs. Jenkins, but had known her for only about two years and had found her rather difficult to get acquainted with. She offered to buy a Boy Scout outfit for William and to visit Mrs. Jenkins more frequently.

*Financing.*—Immediately after Mr. Jenkins' death the family found itself in financial difficulties. Mrs. Jenkins managed to borrow \$25, and help was given by neighbors and church. But within two weeks the Family Welfare Society was asked to assist.

The first thought—after giving emergency relief—was in regard to workmen's compensation. An attorney who was consulted said Mrs. Jenkins had a good case. (This was in a state without a state accident insurance fund or a state commission to adjust disputed cases.) The company agreed to settle for \$2300, but the attorney, who was giving his services free, thought in view of Mr. Jenkins' wage scale the compensation should be \$3600. Before he could take further action, Mrs. Jenkins dismissed him and through the Family Welfare Society secured another attorney who agreed to handle the matter for one-third of the compensation finally allowed. He also agreed to advance some money to Mrs. Jenkins, but after letting her have \$100 in small sums, said he could not do more. The compensation case dragged out until 16 months after Mr. Jenkins' death, when it was compromised before going to court and a settlement of \$2200 was made. After deducting the \$100 advanced



and the lawyer's fee of \$700, this left Mrs. Jenkins \$1400. Of this she may have saved something, but she spent the most of it in ways unknown to the social workers.

From the beginning the Family Welfare Society gave financial aid and kept it up almost continuously, although Mrs. Jenkins worked part of the time and had later the compensation money, which she said she planned to invest, but seemed to let slip through her fingers. At the beginning of the school year before compensation was secured a plan was worked out jointly by the church, school, parent-teachers' association and Family Welfare Society for financing the family by a regular allowance, in order that Mrs. Jenkins might make a home for the children while they attended school.

The laws of this state provide for a "mothers' pension" to be granted in such cases as Mrs. Jenkins', but the family had been away for 13 years and only recently returned, so that they were ineligible—not meeting the technical residence requirements. A year later, however, they were eligible and received a regular allowance through the Juvenile Court. This continued only a short time, being stopped when the compensation was received. During the time the pension was in force the Court left the supervision and personal service to the Family Welfare Society, in order that duplication and confusion might be avoided.

*Services Rendered.*—The Family Welfare Society not only attended to financing the family, but helped in many other ways. It drew in the cooperation of various individuals and groups to provide medical attention, schooling, summer outings, Christmas gifts, etc. Virginia was encouraged to join the Campfire Girls and William the Boy Scouts. While Mrs. Jenkins was employed, Edwin was cared for in a day nursery. The church was helpful in various ways, especially in the social development of Virginia. When the children were old enough to work the Family Welfare Society assisted in finding suitable employment.

After Mrs. Jenkins received the compensation money, no material relief was given for a time. The visitor main-

tained her contact with the family but received "no co-operation at all." It was not until this money was gone (presumably, at least) that the Society was able to bring any influence at all to bear on Mrs. Jenkins. About this time the general secretary, a man, told her that unless she showed some cooperation the society would have nothing more to do with her. After that Mrs. Jenkins' attitude improved, though there continued to be occasional "flare-ups." The visitor talked plainly to her many times, but also gave in to her in certain ways, such as letting her purchase for herself the things about which she complained so much. When there was an emotional outburst she just let Mrs. Jenkins alone.

It is of interest that at no time did the social workers dealing with Mrs. Jenkins feel that it was necessary or desirable to break up the family and put the children either into institutions or foster homes. In spite of her peculiar temperament and erratic behavior, Mrs. Jenkins was considered the best care-taker for her children, and it was believed that their presence in the home was a good thing for her.

This is a "current case," so no real conclusions can be drawn. But it is fair to say that Mrs. Jenkins has become a more stable, dependable person and a better manager. Her attitude toward the social workers who see her is friendly. She is working intermittently, as are Virginia, William, and Harry, so that the Family Welfare Society has been able to reduce its financial assistance. Virginia does clerical work in the afternoon. William does odd jobs and attends a trade school. Harry sells papers in the afternoon. Edwin is in kindergarten but Harry has to be called from his room frequently when Edwin has a seizure. His difficulties have yet to be straightened out. Perhaps the greatest gains have been made by Virginia. She is self-possessed when her mother has an emotional outburst, is growing in self-confidence and is anxious to assume responsibility for the support of the family. Although she realizes her mother's shortcomings, she is loyal to her. Virginia is highly thought of at school; a church worker wants her



to go to college. The visitor says "she is going to be the backbone of the family."

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Widowhood involves a physical break in the family. The death of husband or wife is one of those crises of which we spoke in the previous chapter. It produces an inevitable period of unadjustment, but most widows and widowers succeed in reorganizing their scheme of life so as to meet the requirements of the new situation. We have all known instances of this sort. It is when there are other difficulties that the death of husband or wife precipitates an acute crisis which may develop into chronic maladjustment. With Mrs. Jenkins some of these complicating factors were her emotional instability and lack of business experience, four young children in need of paternal oversight, Edwin's physical condition, and delay in settling the matter of compensation. Other combinations of troublesome elements are illustrated by the following instances.<sup>2</sup> In one family the widow was deaf and needed vocational training. The youngest child was delicate and an older boy had difficulty in finding work. Another widow had tuberculosis and was overworking. Her children had adenoids and needed glasses, were neglected and becoming unmanageable. Still another widow and her family were living in an undesirable tenement with male lodgers; the widow had irregular work and the eldest child was a cripple. The husband of one widow had left \$900 insurance which together with home sewing enabled her to support her family for three years. Then she became a victim of tuberculosis and had to have assistance. In another family the widow had badly crippled hands, three children had enlarged tonsils, another had a goiter. The woman was born in Poland, knew very little English and had a very low standard of living.

<sup>2</sup> Richmond, Mary E., and Hall, Fred S., *A Study of Nine Hundred and Eighty-Five Widows*, pp. 50-78; Abbott, Edith, and Breckinridge, S. P., *The Administration of the Aid-to-Mothers Law in Illinois*, U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 82, pp. 32-39.

**Differences between Problems of Widows and Widowers.**

—When the husband dies the family income is greatly reduced, if not completely cut off, and the widow's first problem is financial. Unless there are savings, insurance, or outside intervention she must secure some form of work that can be done in the home or give up her place as homemaker, in part at least, and secure employment outside. In that event some provision must be made for the care of young children during her working hours. In many instances this means giving up the work that she is best qualified to perform and undertaking a task for which she is often quite unfitted.

It is well known that many more widows than widowers turn to social agencies for help. Moreover, the problems presented by widows differ significantly from those of widowers. The latter have fewer economic troubles, but more social adjustments to make. When the wife dies the widower continues to earn as much as before. His main problem is that of finding someone to care for his home and children.<sup>3</sup> Seldom does the widower with young children successfully perform the double task of breadwinner and homemaker. Where there are grown daughters, grandmothers, aunts, etc., who can aid, the problem is simplified, though frequent conflicts of authority may arise. The man may be able to maintain his home by securing a housekeeper, but this is usually difficult. A satisfactory and competent housekeeper is hard to find. Very often she cannot get along with the children, who may regard her as an intruder. Sentimental attachments between the widower and housekeeper and even immorality may complicate the situation. Boarding places, with relatives or others, where the children may be cared for while the father works sometimes provide a satisfactory solution. Remarriage often occurs. Frequently the family can be kept together without outside aid; often it is necessary to break up the home and place the children in foster homes or institutions. The real needs of widowers with small children have been all too little provided for in the work

<sup>3</sup> See "The Mead Children," Chap. V.



of social agencies. Indeed, so few studies have been made of their problems that we have very limited data on which to base generalizations.<sup>4</sup> It is for this reason that we shall confine our further discussion mainly to the difficulties encountered by widows.

**Four Million Widows in the United States.**—According to census figures of 1920, the total number of widows in the United States was 3,917,625, over 11 per cent of females 15 years of age or older. The total number of widowers was 1,758,308, nearly 5 per cent of males 15 years of age or older. However, the majority of both widows and widowers manage somehow to get along and meet their difficulties without appealing to social agencies. No definite information is available as to the number in need of financial assistance or personal service, but we have access to a few figures which are useful as clues. In 1922 it was estimated that there were from 2500 to 3000 widows being cared for under the Mothers' Aid plan in Pennsylvania, 3000 in Massachusetts, and 12,000 in New York.<sup>5</sup> The census figures for 1920 show the total number of widows in these states to be as follows: Pennsylvania, 317,000; Massachusetts, 167,000; New York, 440,000.

A more comprehensive estimate in terms of the children involved was made in 1921.<sup>6</sup> It was found that in six states and seven large cities, embracing a total of six and a half million children under 15 years of age, 66 in every 10,000 were receiving aid under mothers' pension systems. On this basis it was estimated that if pensions were available in the entire country, approximately 200,000 children would be receiving aid at an annual cost of about \$20,000,000.

These figures do not furnish an accurate index of the extent of the problem. On the one hand (with the exception of those for Massachusetts), they include some mothers who are not widows. One-tenth of the mothers receiving

<sup>4</sup> The only data of consequence to which we have access are presented in *Children in Need of Special Care*, by Lucile Eaves and associates.

<sup>5</sup> Steer, Mary A., in U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 109, p. 26.

<sup>6</sup> Lundberg, Emma O., in Nat. Conf. Soc. Work, 1921: 240.

pensions in Illinois in 1917 were not widows. On the other hand, in all these states it is known that many widows with children are being helped either by private agencies or through public outdoor relief departments. Hence the scope of our problem is yet to be determined.

**Causes of Husband's Death.**—It is scarcely sufficient to state that widowhood arises because of the death of husband or wife. This is obviously but the beginning of our inquiry. Having named the diseases and accidents which are the immediate occasions of widowhood, it is important to find what is behind them. This latter task, however, we shall leave for attention in subsequent chapters. The following table which is adapted from a study by the Federal Children's Bureau corresponds closely to the data in other reports.

#### CAUSES OF HUSBAND'S DEATH

*In 679 cases studied by the Federal Children's Bureau<sup>7</sup>*

Cause of death.	Husbands dead at time of applica- tion for aid.
Tuberculosis .....	128
Pneumonia .....	122
Influenza .....	92
Influenza and Pneumonia.....	20
Accident .....	63
Diseases of the Heart.....	46
Diseases of the Kidneys.....	34
Cancer .....	32
Appendicitis .....	17
Suicide .....	10
Other .....	115
Total .....	679

**Difficulties Present Before Husband's Death.**—Widowhood is frequently only the final step in a series of misfortunes which eventuate in maladjustment. Often many

<sup>7</sup> Adapted from U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 118, p. 142. Data in Chapter XXII lead us to believe that the relative importance of the causes shown in this table is open to question.



of them are present before the death of the husband. Some of these are his low wages, the lack of savings and insurance, accumulated debts, even dependence on charity, poor housing, sickness, malnutrition, difficulties incident to migration, conduct problems in children and in the parents, and loss of family morale. The incompleteness of our record makes it impossible to tell just what the combination of factors was that made Mr. Jenkins' death the occasion of such marked maladjustment. We know that his wages were not large enough to make possible adequate savings or insurance and we strongly suspect that he had kept business matters in his own hands. There had been much sickness and one of the children presented a continuing health problem. It is also possible that Mrs. Jenkins was emotionally unstable and hence doubly dependent on her husband. Miss Nesbitt<sup>8</sup> cites a case in which much illness prior to the death of the husband was an important factor in the disorganization of the family. The B's had purchased a city lot; but prolonged illness and taxes "ate up" the property. At one time all the children had typhoid fever and were so ill that two trained nurses were necessary to care for them. When the father died after a three years' illness, leaving five children of from three to eleven years of age, nothing remained but an insurance policy of \$1000, already partly pledged for debts contracted during the illness. Although still under 35 years of age when her husband died, Mrs. B. was physically worn out.

A number of other studies indicate that many families are more or less dependent before the husband's death. Of 500 widows helped by the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor,<sup>9</sup> in 1914, one-fifth had received intermittent relief and another one-fifth fairly continuous assistance for some time before the husband's death. The number would be larger were it not for the fact that many women work while the husband is still living. Of financial resources left to families coming under the care of social agencies easily the most important are

<sup>8</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 118, pp. 37-38.

<sup>9</sup> N. Y., A. I. C. P., Pub. No. 82, p. 29.

insurance and savings. But these are in such small amounts that they do not go far towards meeting the needs of the families. It is estimated that, on the average, nearly two-thirds of the funds left are consumed by the expenses of the funeral. But from 40 to 65 per cent of these families are left without such resources. The low wage received is one reason for this poor showing. The following table records the earnings of 680 fathers.

#### FORMER WEEKLY EARNINGS OF 680 HUSBANDS

*Whose Widows and Children Later Received Pensions.*<sup>10</sup>

Weekly earnings.	Per cent of husbands in each group.
Less than \$15 per week.....	14
\$15 to \$19 per week.....	26
\$20 to \$24 per week.....	26
\$25 to \$34 per week.....	27
\$35 and over per week.....	7
Total .....	100

**The Children in the Family.**—Almost invariably the families needing assistance are those in which there are young children. In most of the studies cited above over nine-tenths of the children were less than fourteen years of age, there being in the largest number of cases three such children per family and in the second largest two. The problems to be met are greatly reduced when there are older children to help either in the care of the home and the younger children or by contributing to the income of the family. In nearly half of the families studied children supplemented the mother's income by working. In numerous cases, however, where there were older children, they were married and so burdened with the rearing of a family of their own that they were unable to assist their widowed parent.

**Widows' Lack of Experience.**—Very frequently widows are quite unequipped by their previous experience and

<sup>10</sup> Adapted from U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 118, p. 31.



training for the struggle which they must face. There are many cases, like that of the Jenkins family, in which business matters are handled so exclusively by the husband that when he is gone, the widow not only is unacquainted with the family's economic status, but is untrained in methods of budgeting and accounting. She may even be inexperienced in handling money and in making purchases. Sometimes, on the other hand, she has been a wage-earner and has controlled her own earnings, but has not learned much about managing a household. Moreover, in the majority of cases her work has been unskilled and her wages low. Hence she is not only unprepared to assume the dual rôle of home-maker and wage-earner; she may not be equipped for either task.

There is another function which the widow may find even more difficult than the economic. It is the guidance of her children's development, frequently referred to as "discipline." This does not mean that mothers know less about bringing up children than do fathers; in general, they probably know more. It merely calls attention to the fact that mothers and fathers bear somewhat different relations to their children; apparently both types of influence are important for the growing boy and girl; and it is very difficult for either parent to add to his own the rôle of the other. A mother who has not participated in the larger life of industry and of the community is peculiarly handicapped in her efforts to bear this dual relationship to her fatherless children.

**Difficulties of Foreign-Born Widows.**—Foreign-born widows are under a more severe handicap than the native-born. Practically all studies of "aid to mothers" show an excessive proportion of foreign-born women receiving pensions.<sup>11</sup> Thus the Children's Bureau found that in Boston two-thirds of the pensioned mothers were foreign-born, while only one-third of the total population was of foreign birth. In other localities the excess of foreign widows was found to be still greater. When we remember that a high percentage of our immigrants are men without

<sup>11</sup> See, for example, U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 118.

families, this disparity between the proportion of foreign and American-born widows receiving pensions is the more striking.

In general, the reasons are not far to seek. We may not assume, however, that they lie in any essential inferiority of the immigrant peoples. They are to be found, on the economic side, in the fact that a large share of the foreign-born are forced to accept work as unskilled laborers at low rates of pay, regardless of what may have been their occupation in the old country. On the social side, they are strangers in a strange land. Widowhood often comes as an added difficulty to a woman who has not yet adjusted herself to American ways. In fact, most immigrant women lag behind their husbands, and still farther behind their children, in the processes of "Americanization." For these reasons the problems of child guidance are for them especially difficult. Finally, citizenship and residence requirements, ranging from one to five years in various states, often make it impossible for the foreign-born widow to receive a mother's pension at the time of her greatest need.

**Haphazard Relief.**—There is evidence that considerable demoralization results from haphazard and irregular relief and otherwise misguided philanthropy. In some cases this takes the form of pauperization growing out of the lack of any plan, the unsystematic and overlapping relief-giving of friends, neighbors, churches, and "relief societies," and the lack of adequate investigation before granting mothers' pensions. In others it involves the breaking up of more or less carefully laid plans because of the abrupt cutting off of financial support. Such a situation may arise, for example, from differences between the pension-granting and the pension-appropriating authorities. In several counties in Illinois in 1915 the appropriations were insufficient to cover the allowances with the result that the pensions had to be cut off for a period of several months.<sup>12</sup>

**What Widowhood Means to the Mothers of Young Children.**—Some of the effects of widowhood have been

<sup>12</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 82, pp. 162-163.



mentioned. Others may be referred to briefly. There is the loneliness and discouragement of the mother left to "carry on" alone. Loss of control of children sometimes appears, especially where the discipline had been left almost entirely to the father. Worry and overwork followed by broken health are rather common where adequate relief plans are lacking.

We have already indicated the frequent necessity of widows going out to work and leaving the children without their care and oversight. Over half of the mothers receiving aid in the localities studied by Miss Nesbitt<sup>13</sup> were working, the proportion varying from one-fifth in Boston to nearly seven-tenths in Westchester County, New York. Of these almost twice as many were employed away from home as at home. Another study of 985 widows showed that<sup>14</sup> nearly 85 per cent worked during the period of treatment by the social agency. Almost three-fifths of these worked only outside their homes. These women did office and other cleaning, factory work, sewing, domestic service, and were employed as janitresses and saleswomen. Over ten per cent did "night work." Those who worked only at home did washing and sewing; and about one-fifth of the total number kept boarders or lodgers. This practice almost inevitably interfered with family privacy and unity and, when the lodgers were men, sometimes gave rise to more serious problems.

Child labor is another very frequent effect of widowhood. Children have been found contributing to the incomes of nearly half the families.

In a large number of cases the family unity, which has received a shock in the death of the father, is further disturbed by the removal of children to relatives, friends, other foster homes or institutions. Sometimes this is done as a matter of course; in other instances it is only resorted to because of the mother's illness or personal unfitness to maintain her home. More and more efforts are being made to keep children with their mothers; and, except among the

<sup>13</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 118, p. 18.

<sup>14</sup> Richmond and Hall, *op. cit.*, pp. 19-28.

more ignorant philanthropists and public officials, poverty is no longer considered an adequate reason for their separation.

It has frequently been stated that juvenile delinquency is a common occurrence in widowed families. We have found, however, no evidence to support this opinion. Such data as are accessible indicate that the opposite may be true.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps this is because the personal service rendered by social workers is a factor in minimizing juvenile delinquency in widowed families.

**How the Problems are Being Met.**—As indicated before, a large proportion of widows and widowers with young children meet their own problems without the necessity for assistance from outside sources. But many are unable to do so. Among the agencies through which society undertakes to assist in the task are departments of public welfare, family welfare societies, day nurseries, child-placing societies, children's institutions, workmen's compensation, insurance, and mothers' pensions. We have seen that the widow's first problem is to secure a regular and adequate income so that she may make a home and care for her children. A long recognized method of meeting this, as well as many other types of social need, has been public outdoor relief, administered by commissioners of the poor, boards of charity, etc., and consisting to a large extent in doles of material relief with a minimum of personal service. Within recent years there have been significant changes in the system, changes represented by the development of city, county and state departments of public welfare employing a personnel trained in social case work. Material relief, while an important element in treatment, is supplemented and rendered far more effective by personal service. Indeed, it is often quite incidental to the larger problem of developing personality.

Alongside of public welfare departments have grown up private organizations commonly known as family welfare societies. It was in these that the technique referred to as

<sup>15</sup> Report of Mass. Comm. on Widowed Mothers, 1913, pp. 162-3; U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 82, pp. 118-119.



social case work received its real start. "Social case work consists of those processes which develop personality through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment."<sup>16</sup> Its evolution has been described as involving four stages: (1) indiscriminate relief, (2) niggardly relief, (3) relief with a plan for rehabilitation, (4) the adjustment of personal and family difficulties with relief playing a minor rôle, as does the use of drugs in the modern practice of medicine. Indeed, the analogy between social case work and medical practice may be carried further. Both begin with a careful analysis of the needs of the individual; both involve a plan of treatment and supervision to see that it is carried out; both require the cooperation of the patient; neither should be attempted except by persons with thorough professional training. Among the specific services which social case workers render to widows and their families are securing employment, providing medical or surgical attention and hospital care, aid in collection of compensation or insurance, aid in managing finances and household affairs, securing scholarships for children, giving them recreational direction, instructing the mother in dietetics, dressmaking, care of health, etc.

Sometimes the general case work agencies, such as we have described, find it necessary to secure the cooperation of more specialized agencies such as child-placing societies, children's "homes," day nurseries or mothers' pension bureaus. Discussion of the first two we shall reserve until later.<sup>17</sup>

**The Day Nursery.**—The day nursery is usually an institution of modest proportions in which a working mother may leave her small children during the day. While there has been considerable discussion as to its ultimate value, it seems to meet a real need in many cases. It is utilized rather frequently when the mother's earning power is more marked than her ability as a housekeeper, when she has only one or two small children, and when no funds are

<sup>16</sup> Richmond, Mary E., *What Is Social Case Work?* p. 98-99.

<sup>17</sup> Chapter V.

available for keeping the family together unless the mother works. It means, however, that she must rise early, prepare breakfast and take the children to the nursery before she goes to her place of employment. It means that after working hours are over she must call for the children, take them home, prepare their supper, put them to bed, wash and mend their clothes, besides attending to her own personal needs. Clearly no woman can be expected to do all this unless she possess unusual strength and ability. Hence, a day nursery that accepts children before there has been a social diagnosis of their family situation may do them and their mother positive injury.

The children who attend a day nursery usually receive a warm meal, enjoy supervised play and perhaps kindergarten activities. If necessary, they may be given a bath. Some of the day nurseries do not stop with the immediate care of the children, but include in their services the instruction of the mother herself in child care, cleanliness, cooking, sewing, buying and other domestic functions. Some nurseries even provide laundry facilities where mothers may do their own washing. Frequently mothers' meetings are held, and occasional visits are made to the homes. In these and other ways some mothers are helped over the difficult years and at the same time their living standards are often measurably raised. However, there are many who believe that an adequate system of mothers' pensions would reduce the need for day nurseries to the vanishing point.

**"Mothers' Pensions."**—Probably the most important method of aiding widows with young children, is the mother's pension. This is based on the belief that "what a good mother can do for her children no other woman can do, and no different device can do"; that is, that children should not be removed from mothers who are morally fit and physically and mentally able to care for them; poverty alone is not a sufficient cause for removal. It is held that in their struggle to rear their children properly, widows without financial resources should have regular and adequate support without the stigma attaching to public



poor relief and private charity. On November 1, 1922, 41 states, Alaska and Hawaii had some form of mothers' pension legislation.<sup>18</sup>

The details of these laws differed widely. About the only condition uniformly insisted upon was that of poverty, variously described. Among the provisions found in some states, and not in others, were limitation on the amount of real or personal property owned by the widow (up to \$1000), requirement of moral and physical fitness, minimum period of residence in county and state (up to five years), citizenship and maximum age of children for whom aid might be received (13 to 17). In some states these pensions were not restricted to widows, but might also be granted to mothers whose husbands were totally incapacitated physically or mentally, or who were in a prison or hospital for the insane; mothers who were deserted, divorced or unmarried; expectant mothers who were widows, deserted, divorced or unmarried women.

Great importance attaches not merely to the law itself, but to the officers charged with its administration and the manner in which they perform their duties. Among those charged with the administration of mothers' pension laws in various states are juvenile and county courts, county commissioners, overseers of the poor, boards of children's guardians, state and local boards of child welfare, state agents, boards of public welfare, etc. The more adequate types of administrative methods<sup>19</sup> involve a fairly intensive preliminary investigation; continued supervision with frequent review of cases; the careful keeping of case records; the working out of family budgets in consultation with the mother; supervision of the health of the mother and children, including physical examination, weighing and measuring tests, hospital and sanitarium care; securing suitable positions for mothers and working children; supervision of schooling of children; instruction of mothers in homemaking, English, care and training of children, etc.

<sup>18</sup> Eckman, Lulu L., *Public Aid to Children in Their Own Homes*, U. S. Chil. Bur., Legal Chart No. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Nesbitt, Florence, in U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 118, p. 30.

The social service given often exceeds in importance the financial aid.

The amounts granted vary greatly. In a few localities the amount of the pension is the difference between the estimated budget of family expenses and the income. But most states establish an arbitrary maximum allowance of a certain sum for the first child and a smaller amount for each additional child. The Illinois study<sup>20</sup> showed that considerably over half the families in Chicago receiving pensions had a deficit, while about 40 per cent had a small surplus. They found in the "down state" counties a condition that is quite common—the pensions were very inadequate, being in many places little more than doles. The median amount was between \$10 and \$15 a month. The practice of granting pensions at a fixed rate per child or per family was very common and in the great majority of cases the pension was obviously too low to maintain a decent standard of living.

One of the principal difficulties is that the administration of these laws has been left to local officials who have little conception of their real task and no training in social case work. Hence we find widespread ignorance of the needs of the widows who apply for help, lack of intelligent planning for their future and that of their children, abrupt changes in policy and other bungling which interferes seriously with the usefulness of the law. To eliminate some of these defects a number of states have instituted centralized control or supervision, which in some instances has proven quite effective.

**What of Prevention?**—Quite obviously not all widowhood can be prevented. Yet by far the majority of the men referred to in studies cited above died at a comparatively early age from preventable causes. Hence a first step in eliminating the problems of widowhood would be the development of movements for the extension of life and the promotion of health. Of these we shall have more to say in later chapters. The next step would be, accepting a minimum of widowhood as practically inevitable, provi-

<sup>20</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 82, pp. 64-65.



sion of adequate insurance and the facilitating of savings through a higher wage scale. A third would be more specific training of individuals in the handling of money, cultivation of the ability to meet varied situations, and establishment of an emotional balance which would enable one to face trial and difficulty. This is essentially a problem of directing the development of personality, a difficult and complicated, but profitable undertaking.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Without using real names, write the stories of widows with young children whom you know. What problems of health, finance and personal adjustment did they face? How did they meet them? What help did they have, financial or other?
2. Examine the reports of public and private agencies that serve widows and their children, e.g. reports of family welfare societies, departments of public welfare, boards of children's guardians, mothers' pension bureaus, day nurseries. Prepare a summary of each showing:
  - a. Organization and control—draw organization chart
  - b. Personnel—number, training and salaries of staff
  - c. Physical equipment—buildings and furnishings
  - d. Procedure in accepting and dropping responsibility for widows and their children
  - e. Services rendered
3. Examine the laws of your own state which pertain to mothers' pensions, public relief and the supervision of child-caring agencies. Note especially:
  - a. Who is charged with the responsibility for administering these laws
  - b. What provision is made for central control or supervision
  - c. Sources of funds
  - d. What limitations or instructions are written into the laws themselves
4. Visit a case-working agency (e.g. family welfare society or mothers' pension bureau), which serves widows and their children. Write a report including the following:
  - a. Organization—constitution, history and organization chart
  - b. Financing—sources and distribution of expenses (secure annual report)
  - c. Personnel—board, staff; training, duties, salaries, length of service
  - d. Equipment—offices and furnishings
  - e. Record system—secure sample forms

- f. Case-work routine—application, investigation, planning, relief and personal service
5. Visit a day nursery and report on the following:
  - a. Organization—as above
  - b. Financing—as above
  - c. Personnel—as above
  - d. Equipment—plant, furnishings, especially beds, play apparatus, kitchen and dining room equipment
  - e. Record system—secure sample forms
  - f. Admission policies and routine
  - g. Care of children in nursery—food, rest, play, education, supervision, health
  - h. Service to the child's family
  - i. Cooperation with other agencies, especially confidential exchange, family welfare societies, schools and health agencies
6. Secure statistics for insurance agencies in your home district concerning:
  - a. Number and value of policies in effect
  - b. Number and amount of monthly benefits paid during last year
7. Secure statistics from savings banks and building and loan associations in your home district concerning:
  - a. Number of depositors
  - b. Amount of deposits
  - c. Increase or decrease during last year

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## CHAPTER III

### DIVORCE

In the previous chapter we were concerned with situations in which a physical break in the family circle—death of husband or wife—is frequently followed by a loss of morale and inability of the surviving members to live successfully together. We turn now to a different type of situation, one in which failure to get along together precedes the physical break-up of the family—divorce or desertion. The story of the Haynes family displays some of the typical factors which appear before and lead up to a divorce.<sup>1</sup>

#### HAYNES VS. HAYNES <sup>2</sup>

Instead of beginning this story with a picture of the court-room and the sordid details of a suit for divorce, let us begin with an account of the homes from which John and Mary came, their childhood and youth, their courtship and early days of married life. We start with Mary's father, Benjamin Wilson.

*Mr. Benjamin Wilson* was born in an eastern state seventy years ago. He has always been energetic and hard working, ever desirous of making a living for his family which consisted of a wife and eight children. He himself had no trade and only a limited education. However, he was always at work, taking whatever he could get. He

<sup>1</sup> We are handicapped in the treatment of this subject by the dearth of recent material. Research in this field is very greatly needed.

<sup>2</sup> This account was not taken from the files of a social agency. It was written by one personally acquainted with the people mentioned in the story. As in all other cases in this book, identifying data have been modified or eliminated so far as could be done without marring the account.



was intensely religious and very autocratic with the children, never allowing them to explain or reason out their cases of misconduct. Apparently he could not conceive of their having any rights other than those assigned by their parents. He ruled with an iron hand. Because of his meager income, only the bare necessities of life could be provided. The family had to do without many social and educational advantages. Mr. Wilson bought and sold live stock throughout the state and was at home only once or twice a week. At these times he checked up the children to see if they had completed the work he assigned when he left home before. Severe punishment was meted out if the task was not finished. Often the mother interfered to shield the children and often she would do the work herself to prevent their punishment.

Mr. Wilson was not addicted to alcohol, but he "took a glass of beer or whisky when he felt like it." He has never suffered from any disease so far as he knows, but has been bothered for over thirty years with a rupture. He has been operated upon for this several times, but never allowed these operations to be successful because of his impatience to get to work and his forgetting that the wound had not thoroughly healed.

*Mrs. Wilson* also was born in an eastern state. She is five years younger than her husband. Her family moved West when she was about six years old. She married at the age of nineteen. During her forty-six years of married life, Mrs. Wilson has endured many hardships that accompany the rearing of a large family with meager resources. She realized the autocracy of her husband and his unfairness to the children and she often shielded them when they really needed reprimanding. She had very little control over them, and possibly would have had less if they had not had a genuine love for her. She was always gentle and helpful with her family to the best of her ability, but she never won her children's confidence.

As to her health record, Mrs. Wilson had a number of so-called children's diseases and then was quite well and strong until she was about forty. At that time she became

nervous and weak, perhaps from overwork. However, no medical diagnosis was made, and she afterward regained her strength. More recently she has been suffering from gallstones for which she has been receiving treatment for several years.

*Children.*—There were eight children in the Wilson family, besides a tiny babe who died of pneumonia at six months. The oldest boy died in military service, and another son lives in a distant city with his wife and children, is doing well in business and is generally respected by his neighbors and fellow citizens. The oldest daughter is happily married, the third son is a successful farmer. He also has a family. The next is an unmarried daughter who lives at home with her parents and does private nursing. Because the father is no longer able to work except at odd jobs, this daughter provides most of the family's income at present. Two other daughters live, one in the same city, the other in a neighboring state. The youngest daughter Mary, was the baby of this large family. It is with her that we are most concerned in this story.

*Mary Wilson Haynes.*—Mary Wilson, who later married John Haynes, was born when her mother was forty-two years old. Prenatal conditions were normal, except for the nervous, worried condition of the mother. The baby weighed nine pounds at birth and seemed to be healthy in every way. She was bright, and attractive, a mentally normal child. She showed early signs of inheriting the highly strung, energetic qualities of her father. At about nine months, she could walk and talk, but she had a case of cholera infantum and forgot how to walk. She did not recover this ability until she was about thirteen months old. She was thin and seemed undernourished until she was about two and a half. From then on she grew stronger and more normal physically, except for going through a number of children's diseases. She showed a great interest in everything around her with the exception of books, of which the family now had a well chosen supply. She was petted by all members of the family, and in return, showed a little affection, all that was expected of her since the



family was undemonstrative. At times it seemed that the members of the family were indifferent to each other, though they maintained a deep and unexpressed interest.

Up to her entrance in school, she had few playmates besides her own brothers and sisters. In company with her older sisters she spent hours each day playing with paper dolls. For these she imagined a luxurious life in which the doll families had numerous servants, rare delicacies to eat, richly furnished houses and most elegant manners. Each family was given an aristocratic name. She was also very fond of playing with real dolls in which her love of the elegant was also displayed.

She started to kindergarten when five years old and did average work. Her highly strung nature caused her to do little things that were disconcerting to the teacher who stamped her as mischievous and lacking in concentration. She carried this reputation from one grade to another. To cover up her embarrassment when reprimanded, Mary assumed a "don't care" expression, while inwardly she was very much chagrined. This misunderstanding between her and her teachers grew, as did also her lack of concentration. Her indifference to lessons became more pronounced; although she always ranked fairly high and always made her grades, she was not nearly working up to her fullest capacity. Her liveliness and wit won her many friends and admirers among her schoolmates, but she formed no close friendships. These schoolmates admired her for braving all punishments without protesting or drawing in others who were equally or more guilty than she. She accepted the punishment for others' guilt, although protesting her innocence. Since she would not tell who the guilty party was, the teachers put down "untruthfulness" against her. In spite of all this, there was always a measure of friendliness between Mary and her teachers.

One thing that annoyed her both in grammar and high school days was that her clothes did not suit her. She was compelled to wear the handed-down dresses of the sisters and other relatives. Those clothes were often of cheap material, and, for the most part, unbecoming both

in style and color. This discontent grew on her and she became sarcastic in covering up her real feeling. She began to grow bitter and complained about the injustice of having been born into a large, poor family. Her seventh year in school was the happiest one. She had the good luck to have a young teacher about twenty years old who understood Mary and who realized that most people did not discover the real girl but only the sham.

Her life in high school was in general a repetition of that of the grammar school. Her regrets at having been born into this large family grew and she began to blame her parents. She demanded more to gratify her aesthetic taste. Her liveliness and popularity with her crowd were still prominent. Outwardly, she let nothing seem to bother her for she had mastered the art of covering up her feelings. She worked in a department store on Saturdays to help supply herself with spending money. Her second oldest sister, Jessie, who was still unmarried, paid for her high-school education, all her books and her clothes. Since at this time the sister had just begun to nurse, it was impossible on her small salary to buy the kind of clothes that Mary craved and to help keep up the house too.

Jessie was very fond of Mary and caught the significance of her mental state; she gained her confidence; realized her needs and set about doing the best she knew how to meet those needs. Mary was fast losing her friends because of her habitual, bitter sarcasm. Jessie got her into an organized Sunday-School class of which Jessie herself was the teacher. She influenced the young people to include Mary in their good times; once more she became interested and was enjoyed by these companions for her sunny and quick-witted nature. She was more careful about the use of her tongue, having been cautioned by her older sister. Unwisely, as it may seem to professional case workers, Jessie indulged Mary in a great many of her desires, getting from such indulgence the satisfaction of seeing the younger sister enjoying those girlish pleasures of which she herself had been deprived from scarcity of family funds. She bought the little fancy things that Mary wanted, the clothes she



desired, gave her an allowance, and planned hiking and camping trips for her and her new friends. As Mary's taste for clothes grew, she became dissatisfied with what Jessie could get for her. She became dissatisfied with her home because it was not furnished as nicely as those of the other girls. Fundamentally, the home was a good one. It was in a good neighborhood, but it lacked all the modern conveniences. This was a sore trial to Mary. She became more bitter and complaining because of her being born in a poor family; she blamed her parents for this.

At the end of her five-year high school course, Mary had achieved little either in scholarship or in extra-curricular activities. Jessie wanted her to go to college or teacher's training school, but Mary was bent on going to work so that she might have more money to spend for clothes. She graduated from high school at about eighteen years of age. Because of her training in shorthand and typewriting she was able to take a position as stenographer with the Simpson Oil Company at \$20 a week. At that time this was a good salary. She spent her money on clothes, church, and recreation. She was once more dubbed a "good fellow" and seemed more affectionate and considerate of her family.

*John Haynes.*—During this time a young man at the church showed special attentions to Mary. He was a more or less unsocialized being, having lived a family life of exile, away from the normal contact of other children and neighbors. His family's great boast was of its "Virginia blue blood." His father's work, and ignorance of the city, caused them to settle among people far inferior to the Haynes family; hence the mother would not allow John and his sister to have anything to do with the other children. Home life at the Haynes' was uninteresting, somber, and unattractive. The parents were sober, and lacked a sense of humor. The mother's chief interest was in maintaining aristocratic traditions of the family's ancestors. The father was given to this too, but he spent a great deal of his time reading cheap, exciting novels of the impossible, imaginative type. Little wonder that the boy and his sister grew up stiff and unsocial. Later the family bought a home in a

better neighborhood. It was furnished with good taste and the sister, Martha, who was too sickly to attend high school, became a good housekeeper, as was her mother.

John graduated from high school with a good showing. His chief interests were hikes in the country with his father and sister and reading novels, of which he and his sister and father were so fond. He had only one boy companion. His sister had none after she graduated from grammar school.

During John's high school career his father ran away twice, telling no one of his intended departure nor letting anyone hear from him while away. The mother met the family expenses by taking in washing, keeping the fact from the neighbors as much as possible.

John was an unsocialized being, but aristocratic in his bearing when he first came to the notice of the church. Because he had a good "line of talk," he seemed superior to the other young men, and Mary became quite interested in him. He was tolerated by the crowd, due to the influence of the older members of the young people's society. He was given to self-pity and a feeling of self-importance. He was aided in making this more convincing by his wonderful and well cultivated imagination and his fluent command of unusually good English. He was cynical and sharp tongued upon occasion.

Before the year was out, Mary decided that she could not work for the oil company any longer. It was too hard on her and some of the salesmen used abusive language and swore violently. She gave up her position and went to work for a gas company, getting twenty dollars a week, which was five dollars less than she had been receiving. She was not contented at this work. Her mother's health was failing and at a family conference, it was decided that one of the girls should stay at home. Mary was the one chosen. She was quite contented with the decision; indeed she herself had volunteered to stay. She became quite efficient in her housework and more sympathetic toward her mother. John Haynes paid her marked attention during this time. He seemed to have a great and unexplained



influence over her. She was not in love, but was very much impressed with him. He enlisted in the army when he thought he would be drafted but was not sent out of the city before the Armistice was signed. Nevertheless he was a hero in his own estimation. He secured a fairly good position as assistant manager of a department in a paint company.

In August, 1919, John's mother died. He insisted upon Mary's being at his home and assisting with funeral arrangements, which she did. But it preyed so on her mind that she was near a nervous breakdown. John was depressed with a deep melancholy and sought sympathy from Mary more and more. She was held in a state of nervous fear which she concealed from everyone. Upon her refusing to marry him, he threatened suicide. He was so convincing in this, that he persuaded her to marry him secretly. The young bride paid for the wedding trip and other expenses. Young Haynes explained that his lack of ready money was due to the payment of large bills in connection with his mother's illness and death. (Just how much he contributed was never satisfactorily determined.)

Since Mrs. Wilson's health had improved, Mary decided to go to work. They had never let their marriage be known. John was living at his home while Mary was living at hers. She found employment with an insurance company. She and her husband saved their money to buy furniture. Their first investment was a \$300 bedroom set which was all out of keeping with the cheap, half-furnished rooms in which they afterwards lived. But this was in accord with his ideal of artistocratic homes. While it appealed to her almost as strongly, yet she mildly wondered "what they would have to go with this elegance." In November, against the advice of her husband, Mary insisted upon making their marriage known, for she had become pregnant. John protested and vowed that this would end all their good times. While the relatives on both sides were dissatisfied with the marriage, both sides agreed to make the best of it. This agreement was adhered to on her part, but was disregarded among her people.

Mary had no real love for her husband, but the same spirit of being "game" which carried her through her grammar school days prompted her now uncomplainingly to make the best of a bad job. John wanted to go home to live after the marriage was announced, but Mary resented the idea, for she stood in fear of her father-in-law who was very queer at times. At last, under pressure, she consented. In December, owing to the atmosphere of the home and her physical condition, she could stand it no longer; so they moved into two, poor, half-furnished rooms. John was still very short of cash because he said that he was still giving his father money for the mother's expenses and had also given sums of \$75 and \$100 to his father to pay on the mortgage of the home. About this time John lost his job. They had little money saved and a large furniture bill to meet. After a month's idleness, John got a job with the Ford Garage on a night shift. This went greatly against the grain, but his wife was nervous and insisted upon trying to make him see his responsibility and realize what the expenses would be in a few months. He got a great deal of satisfaction out of the fact that his friends admired him for taking what he could get to do in "spite of the fact that the work was far beneath him." This soon palled and he began to grumble because he did not have a good time and he complained about the coming of the baby and blamed his misfortune on it, never taking the responsibility upon himself. He gave up his job, "framed up" a story of being discharged and made his wife believe it.

Whole days he spent reading in the library, coming home at the usual time as though from a day's work. He made his wife believe that he had a fine position with an automobile company as salesman, that he was doing exceptional work and that at the end of two weeks they would be pretty well straightened out financially. But as the days went by and no money materialized, John was obliged to make excuses. These were varied. Once the wealthy woman from the East who was visiting the city refused to take the car after all the details of the sale had been completed,



so he lost his commission. Then there was a legal tie-up, and he would have to bring suit against the company before he could get his money. At this excuse, investigations were made and it was discovered that the company really did exist, but that John had never even asked for a position there. The young couple had to give up their rooms for an old apartment. John borrowed \$20 from one of the boys and gave it to his wife, declaring that he had earned it. He borrowed another \$20 for a pink silk evening gown.

At last when it was time for Mary to go to the hospital, there was no money to meet the expense; one of the brothers-in-law furnished the necessary amount. In the meantime money had been borrowed from Mary's sister, Jessie. The young Haynes family had now moved into a house near Mrs. Wilson, who, with Jessie, helped to care for the new baby and mother. From the same source, Mary received most of the substantial food necessary for herself and nursing child. Often the only provisions in the house were used up for the husband's breakfast.

After things had gone on in this fashion for some time, Mary went to live with her mother. She went to work, leaving the baby in Mrs. Wilson's care. John went home to live with his father and sister. He tried to get his wife to take him back, but she saw that this would not do; she said when he had "made good" she would consider it. John and his father sold their home and bought a Ford. In this they motored through the country, winding up in Montana. All this time John tried to make his wife believe that he was "making good."

In November, the wandering father and his son came home and looked for Mary and the baby. They had satisfied their craving for wandering and had come triumphantly home expecting to be hailed as heroes. John wanted to return to his wife and promised all kinds of reform, steadfastness and future happiness, but his wife had lost all respect for him and refused. The meeting ended in a stormy scene in which John again threatened suicide. The wife by this time realized that this was a cowardly bluff. She refused to see him outside of her mother's home. John

Haynes and his father both felt that they had been most unjustly dealt with and once more "took up the life on the road."

The young wife's mind was now definitely set on securing a divorce. The husband was greatly shocked that she would think of such a thing, and not wanting her to be in communication with him during the proceedings, kept his hiding place a secret. The wife still worked. She was employed by the Johnson Shoe Store, where she had been working before her marriage. At work she was well liked and tried to be jolly as she had been before. But it became very hard for her to work all day and to come home and care for the baby. For the first time Mary realized the sacrifice that her mother and sister Jessie were making on account of her mistakes. It worried her to see them making clothes and taking care of the child, activities in which she did not have the heart or the physical strength to take part. She grew very discouraged. She shunned her friends and worried about the future of her baby girl who was admired and loved by all.

While the divorce proceedings were still under way, a young tailor of the neighborhood, a man ten years her senior, became very interested in Mary and the baby. The interest grew to love on his part and he wanted her to marry him just as soon as the divorce could be granted. She considered the attentions of this Mr. Baker from a commercial point of view—it was a way out of her difficulties. Also Mr. Baker had a real fondness for the baby, whose future would thus be taken care of. While Mary liked Mr. Baker, in her heart she did not really love him. However, she decided that she could "make a go of it," and so as soon as the divorce was secured, she married him.

Mary has always felt that the biggest thing in this second marriage was getting a home for herself and baby, and because of that feeling has been rather careless of other matters. She yields to his fancies in regard to the home management. Again her love for the elegant led her to purchase an expensive dining-room set totally out of keep-



ing with the rooms above the tailor shop where they went to live. They had not even provided for an ice-box or an adequate supply of dishes.

But after a time business "picked up," and the Bakers rented a house at \$60 a month. They leased another and more promising site for their shop, but went so far into debt that things began to look very doubtful. During a period of depression, Mr. Baker sold his old car to Jessie. She bought it because she thought in doing so she was helping her sister. Her brother-in-law thought in a month or so business would "pick up" and he would buy the car back again. But the machine was a "white elephant" on her hands and she gladly turned it over to Mr. Baker when he decided that he needed it. Jessie unwisely let him have the car without any payment and has received none since, though that was months ago. They now moved out into an unsettled part of the city, further to cut expenses.

During the spring, Mrs. Baker, swayed by her love of the nice things that she could not afford, bought several expensive articles of clothing on her sister Jessie's charge account at one of the large stores down town. She had always expected her husband to meet these bills, but he was always so unfortunately short of cash, that Jessie had to pay them. In the face of these debts and many more, Mr. Baker bought a new Buick (at payments of \$85 a month). Mary thought it extravagant and felt that he should first pay Jessie. But she was so feeble in her protests, that her husband was not duly impressed and the debts are still unpaid. Later, he became so involved that the wholesalers would not extend his credit and demanded cash. He lost his new car because he was not able to make payments. He was forced to sell his business. Now he is doing a very practical thing in securing a salaried position with one of the leading clothiers of the city. He plans to give up the suburban house in which they live and move into the city where he can go to work on the street cars.

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**The Increasing Divorce Rate.**—Probably no social fact is more often commented on in popular discussion than

the increase in the divorce rate. This increase may be stated in several ways, e. g. in proportion to the total population and to the total number of marriages.

### INCREASE IN DIVORCES

*Data from various reports of U. S. Bureau of the Census*

Year.	Total number of divorces.	Divorces per 100,000 population.	Divorces per 100 marriages. <sup>3</sup>
1870.....	10,962	28	3.5
1880.....	19,663	39	4.8
1890.....	33,461	53	6.1
1900.....	55,751	73	8.1
1916.....	112,036	112	11.0
1922.....	148,554	136	13.1

These figures include, of course, only the legal divorces. To these should be added a considerable number of separations that do not pass through the divorce courts.

**Comparative Divorce Rates.**—There is a striking diversity in the divorce rates of the various states.<sup>4</sup> Excluding South Carolina which grants no divorces at all, the lowest rate in 1922 was that of the District of Columbia, 37 per 100,000 of the population. Other low rates were those of New York, 40; North Carolina, 50; North Dakota, 51; and Georgia, 62. At the other extreme were Nevada with a rate of 1,325; Oregon, 311; Oklahoma, 262; Texas, 259; and California, 250. Stated in other terms there were 3,600 marriages to 100 divorces in the District of Columbia, but only 90 marriages to 100 divorces in Nevada.

With few exceptions the divorce rate was higher in cities of over 100,000 inhabitants than it was in the smaller cities and country districts.<sup>5</sup> The exceptions were where a large proportion of the population of cities was Roman Catholic or of foreign birth, among whom the rate was low. In nearly 70 per cent of the cases the divorce was granted

<sup>3</sup> Ratios for 1870 and 1880 are estimates made by Ellwood, Chas. A., *Sociology and Modern Social Problems*, p. 141.

<sup>4</sup> Preliminary figures issued by Bureau of Census, Oct. 3, 1923.

<sup>5</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Marriage and Divorce, 1867-1906*, pp. 74-75.



to the wife.<sup>6</sup> In over 52 per cent of the total cases no children were reported.

**Legal Grounds versus Real Causes.**—We are not told what were the grounds alleged in Mrs. Haynes' petition for a divorce. But it is perfectly safe to assume that neither this nor any similar legal document would include anything like an adequate explanation of the trouble between the woman and her husband. Thus Mrs. Haynes might truthfully and appropriately have made desertion and failure to provide the basis of her request of the court. But the real explanation of the domestic difficulties in this case must include the whole personal history of both man and wife. Both were "spoiled" from childhood; both were uninstructed in the responsibilities of married life; the circumstances under which they began the marital relationship were thoroughly unwholesome.

Thus we can easily see that any adequate analysis of the causative factors in divorce must involve recognition that the grounds alleged in many court cases are not the real reasons. Persons who wish to secure a divorce utilize the necessary or the most feasible ground. This is illustrated by the fact that in New York State all divorces are granted for adultery, not, it is safe to assume, because it is the only real cause but because it is the only legal ground upon which a divorce may be secured. The most common legal grounds are adultery, desertion, cruelty, drunkenness, and neglect to provide. Over 93 per cent of divorces are granted on these five grounds, over 60 per cent for adultery and desertion alone. Whether they represent actual or merely alleged situations, they are in most cases only the symptoms and results of previous family disorganization of which the divorce is the legal recognition. They reveal practically nothing as to the underlying factors in the case. This is not recognized in the law itself but is to a considerable extent by judges in the interpretation and application of the law.

**Factors in the Rising Divorce Rate.**—In attempting to explain the rising divorce rate, it is important to distinguish

<sup>6</sup> U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Marriage and Divorce*, 1916, p. 15.

three sets of factors: (a) legal grounds or alleged causes, (b) real causes or circumstance leading to divorce in particular cases, and (c) general social changes in which we are most likely to find the explanation of the increase. Primarily the rising rate is incident to the great economic, religious, ethical and other social changes taking place in society, and the family readjustments which they necessitate. "The whole human family is moving out of an old worn-out social, economic, and theological house into a new one and family jars are bound to result."<sup>7</sup> Economic development has brought with it an opening of opportunities for women which has freed many of them from dependence upon matrimony as a means of support. Having been wage earners before marriage they are not adverse to returning to work if marital relations are not agreeable. The family is not an economic unit to as great an extent as in the past. Coincident with this development, and correlated also with the spread of education among the masses of people, have come important changes in the mores and public opinion. There is a more liberal social attitude toward divorce. There has been an increase in popular knowledge of the courts and the law and a willingness to utilize them. Displacing the semi-patriarchal family of the past there is a democratic trend in family relationships which demands an equal status for men and women and a more equitable distribution of rights and duties. Ecclesiastical control is breaking down; new ethical standards are developing. The economic independence of women is making possible an effective demand on their part for an equal standard of morals for both sexes. It is no longer necessary for them to acquiesce in infidelities on the part of their husbands, which were once condoned.

The larger proportion of divorces granted on demand of the wife undoubtedly grows in part from this fact. In so far as the increasing divorce rate grows out of this demand it indicates a rising rather than a falling standard of morals. The increasing rate is no proof of a growth

<sup>7</sup> O'Hare, *Is Divorce a Forward or a Backward Step?* The Arena, April, 1905, p. 414, quoted in Lichtenberger, J. P., *Divorce*, p. 213.



of sex vice. The growing mobility of present-day populations is simply breaking up primary-group controls. In some states the increasing laxity of divorce laws and their administration is a significant factor.

**Ill-advised Marriages.**—Turning now to the circumstances leading to divorce in particular cases, our attention is immediately drawn to marriages which never should have occurred. Such was clearly the case with John and Mary Haynes. Given the marriage of a couple with such personalities as theirs, divorce or some other type of family disruption is a foregone conclusion. Speaking generally, ill-advised marriages may be classified under several types. There is the hasty marriage contracted before the man and the woman have become adequately acquainted with each other, as was the case in many war marriages. In 1919 only eight states<sup>8</sup> required advance notice before a license might be issued. In five of them all applicants were required to give notice, but in the other three it applied only to non-residents. Five days was the period of advance notice except in New Jersey where it was 48 hours. In only one state, Wisconsin, must the notice be posted. Only in Maine and Wisconsin was there definite provision for the filing and hearing of objections. In Delaware and New Jersey a period of time had to elapse after the issuance of the license before the marriage could be performed.

There is the marriage of persons too young to know their own minds or to realize the significance of the act. In 17 states no minimum age limits (age below which a marriage may not be contracted even with the consent of the parents) have been fixed by statute. In nine of these the common-law marriagable ages of 14 for males and 12 for females have been formally recognized. On the other hand, it is well known that where marriages occur during middle age or after, there are serious difficulties of adjustment, because habits are more firmly established. However, these difficulties may be offset by greater maturity of judgment, tolerance and "common sense."

<sup>8</sup> Hall, Fred S., and Brooke, Elizabeth W., *American Marriage Laws*, pp. 36-37.

More serious is the marriage of those physically or mentally unfit because of disease or defect. Although not often mentioned in divorce proceedings, there is little doubt that this is frequently a cause. In 1919 nineteen states had no restrictions upon the marriage of persons suffering from mental or physical disabilities. In the states having such laws the provisions for enforcement were usually very ineffective. In five states the only requirement was a statement of the applicant under oath that he had none of the disabilities specified in the law. In only four states was it required that there should be physicians' certificates. Most of the restrictions referred to imbecility, epilepsy, feeble-mindedness, insanity, venereal disease, and in some cases pauperism, transmissible disease, drunkenness and habitual criminality.

Other ill-advised marriages are those based only on "romantic" love, "forced" marriages, and the occasional "marriage for money," all of which represent rather futile attempts to get out of difficult situations. For the unadjustments involved in marriages of these various types, divorce or legal separation is often the only available remedy.

For these marriages our moral codes are in the main responsible. They reflect to a high degree the extreme individualistic philosophy which permeates so much of American life. Social considerations are made secondary to the virtually unchecked desires of the individual. Such marriages are a fountain head of divorces.

**Other Factors Leading to Divorce.**—Among the other factors are differences in religious, community, national, or racial background. These imply and usually involve differences in customs, training, ideas and ideals, attitudes toward life in general and toward marriage in particular, which reduce the probabilities of a satisfactory adjustment. Marked differences in age bear much the same causative relation. In over 40 per cent of divorce cases studied in the Cincinnati Court of Domestic Relations<sup>9</sup> there was a

<sup>9</sup> Hart, Nornell, *Sex Antagonism in Divorce*, Nat. Prob. Ass'n, 1922: 135-141.



difference of five years or more between the ages of the husband and wife. The usual proportion of such differences is only about 12 per cent. Interference of relatives, particularly the "in-laws," whether directly or indirectly, is a fairly common source of disturbance. Sex antagonism or maladjustment in the sex relationship is probably far more prevalent than court records indicate. It appears to be the central factor in most cases of cruelty, abuse, neglect, and incompatibility. In all but 3 out of 100 cases studied in Cincinnati this seemed to be the core of the difficulty. This may grow out of excessive sexual demands, usually on the part of the husband, sexual coldness, perversions, sadism, impotency, infidelity, venereal disease contracted before marriage, etc.

Monetary difficulties underlie many family breaks. There is not so much direct quarreling over money as there is indirect irritation coming from the attempt to live up to a higher standard than the income will permit. It is quite commonly supposed that easy divorce laws constitute an incentive to bad marriages, but there is little evidence that this is true. Certainly interstate migration for purposes of divorce has not contributed very much to raise the average rate. Census figures from 1867 to 1906 indicate that about one couple out of five migrated from the state in which they were married before being divorced. This does not mean, however, that the migration was for the purpose of obtaining a divorce, since, as indicated by census figures of both 1890 and 1900, about one-fifth of the native population were living outside the state or territory in which they were born. There also seems to be a comparatively small number of divorces for the sake of remarriage.

**What Divorce Means to the Children.**—It would seem from census figures that children are affected in about two cases out of five. What divorce means in their lives may be seen in the case of Charles <sup>10</sup> who, when his parents were divorced, lived with his old-fashioned grandparents. They held him up to adult standards, deprived him of the com-

<sup>10</sup> Wile, Ira S., *Children and This Clumsy World*, Survey 51: 473-474.

panionship of other children and rigidly controlled his activities. Deprived of "normal" home influences and the continuous guidance of both father and mother there grew up a division of sentiments and feelings towards his parents, great sensitiveness, mental conflicts and a sense of inferiority, resulting in a lack of concentration, unsatisfactory school work, and much unhappiness. "As is most frequently the situation, divorce does its greatest damage to the child."

On the other hand we must not assume that it is always desirable even from the standpoint of the children that their unhappy, discordant home should be maintained. The misbehavior of Beatrice<sup>11</sup> was to a large extent a product of marital unhappiness. There was constant disagreement and strife between the parents. Taking her father as a pattern she became insolent, domineering, unruly, and pugnacious, and lost respect for her mother because of her weakness in accepting cruel, brutal, humiliating treatment. Lichtenberger states the case concisely:

Nor do we think that the argument for the maintenance of the unhappy family is strengthened by the claim often made in respect to the case of children. We are quite persuaded in our own minds, a conviction strengthened by observation and inquiry, that in the vast majority of cases the children fare much better and their chances for arriving at a career of happiness and usefulness are greatly enhanced, if given into the custody of either parent than if compelled to be reared in the atmosphere of discord and contention.<sup>12</sup>

The welfare of the children may well be a primary consideration. But the question whether divorce will be harmful or beneficial can only be answered in the light of the particular conditions existing in each case. The generalization that it is always harmful is certainly unsound. It may represent the lesser of two evils.

**Divorce Laws.**—There is a wide diversity in the divorce laws of the various states. In 1916 divorce was allowed in 47 states for adultery, desertion, and cruelty, in 44 for

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 486-487.

<sup>12</sup> Lichtenberger, *op. cit.*, p. 198.



habitual drunkenness, and in 27 for neglect to provide.<sup>13</sup> These are the most common legal grounds and are the grounds alleged in about 90 per cent of all divorce suits. There are, however, thirty-one other grounds legally recognized in the various states. Their distribution ranges from absolute prohibition in South Carolina, and divorce for adultery only in New York to fourteen legal grounds in New Hampshire. Divorce laws, as well as marriage laws, in the United States have been well termed a "hodge-podge." As a remedy for this situation a federal statute with concurrent uniform legislation by the states has frequently been urged by students of the problem. Doubtless a measure of uniformity would be desirable as a means of avoiding some of the confusing marital tangles that occur; and assuming that such a law would strike a "happy medium," the resulting greater ease of divorce in some states would probably be wholesome in its effect. Possibly also the greater difficulty in certain other states would have a beneficial effect in so far as it might tend to check hasty and ill-advised marriages. However, we are inclined to doubt the wisdom of this step at present because of the honest and marked diversity of views among intelligent people. Legislation which merely suppresses symptoms of family disorganization will never remedy or prevent such disintegration. Merely reducing the number of legal grounds would also be ineffective because of the ease with which one may allege the grounds recognized in law. One wholesome way in which the unwise granting of divorces might be checked would be through a modification of the usual judicial procedure. Something of this sort is taking place in what are known as "family courts" or "courts of domestic relations."

**Courts of Domestic Relations.**—Ordinarily divorce comes within the jurisdiction of courts which try criminal cases. Seldom are there any special facilities for making investigations as to family conditions, the truth or falsity of the charges, the physical and mental condition of the parties, etc. Procedure is usually hasty, superficial, and

<sup>13</sup> U. S. Bureau of Census, *Marriage and Divorce*, 1916, p. 30.

inadequate in every way. Hence there is a considerable amount of hasty divorce as well as hasty marriage. One judge claims to have heard and decided 900 cases in 30 days. In a growing number of cities there is being developed a specialized court known as a court of domestic relations or family court which often has jurisdiction in cases of divorce, desertion and non-support.<sup>14</sup> A fundamental feature of this type of court is the probation system with an adequate staff of well-qualified probation officers. A well equipped clinic and a system of records are also indispensable, since the work of the court is based on investigation of individual cases. When a divorce is sought the matter is assigned to a probation officer who, as a social worker, informally hears the story of the complainant, be it husband or wife. The other party is requested by letter to appear or, if necessary, a summons is issued. An investigation is made to determine all the facts possible in the case. All hearings are conducted informally. If it seems desirable, in view of the facts discovered in the investigation, an attempt is made to adjust the difficulties outside of court. This frequently results in a reconciliation and a resumption of married life on a sounder basis. However, reconciliation may be impossible or undesirable; in which event a separation agreement may be reached or a divorce granted. In any case, the judge has many of the pertinent facts at his disposal and the probabilities of a sound decision are measurably increased.

**What of Prevention?**—If we were moralists, concerned with the maintenance of some particular ethical code, we might well join in fulminations against the “evils of divorce.” But instead, we are humble students of social disorganization, seeking to understand the processes which bring about break-down of the family and other social

<sup>14</sup> E.g. in Hamilton County, Ohio (Cincinnati) there are nine judges of the court of Common Pleas, one of whom is selected by ballot to serve as judge of the Division of Domestic Relations. To him are assigned all divorce and alimony cases, all cases arising under the juvenile court act, including the cases of failure to provide, cases of contributing to delinquency or dependency of children, and the administration of mothers' pensions.



groups. Our interest in prevention is that of determining what other accommodations might be substituted for divorce as a means of ending domestic conflicts; what would be the probable effects of each upon family life and upon personality.

In view of certain very common attitudes, it should be emphasized again that we do not regard divorce as itself an evil or necessarily as the symptom of evil. On the other hand, we are not interested in defending it. We look upon divorce as an attempt—which is frequently successful—to solve certain domestic difficulties. It is a form of social adjustment or accommodation. There can be no question that, for example, in the case of John and Mary Haynes, divorce relieved a very tense domestic situation. Whether some other solution would have brought more complete and more lasting relief we are not prepared to say.

It is urged by some thoughtful students that when a family has become so thoroughly disorganized that the restoration of domestic harmony appears quite impossible, there should be a legal separation rather than a divorce. When they leave the realm of theology and sentiment, they argue somewhat as follows. Persons who have made such a complete failure of one domestic venture should not be free to repeat their mistakes and bring unhappiness to another spouse. Now it is undoubtedly true that some people do go through a series of domestic upheavals, each new marriage ending very much like its predecessor. But on the other hand, there are men and women known to nearly all of us, who have become involved in family tangles for which they are in no sense accountable and which they are pretty certain to avoid in the future. For them the most effective adjustment that can be made is often divorce and remarriage.<sup>15</sup>

Whatever disagreement there may be concerning divorce

<sup>15</sup> We are quite aware of the consistent opposition of certain religious groups and many sincere individuals to the granting of divorce under any circumstances. But we are not talking in terms of abstract right and wrong or of theology. We are concerned with objectively observable changes in human personality as the result of changes in social arrangements such as divorce.

itself, there is not likely to be much dispute over the desirability of heading off the maladjustments for which divorce is an attempted solution. Yet it should not be forgotten that, in the eagerness to prevent family disintegration of one sort, other equally disconcerting conditions may be produced. Thus stricter marriage laws might lead to increased sex irregularity, instead of to greater permanence of marital relations. We do not mean to say that it is impossible for any people, having decided that it will not countenance certain social conditions, to proceed to their elimination. We merely wish to utter the warning that such changes in the folkways are not easily brought about.

We are inclined to believe that, if the types of family disorganization which so frequently end in the divorce court are to be checked at their sources, more effective results may be expected from education than from legislation. Such an educational program would include specific information concerning the nature of family life—the adjustments necessitated by the formation of a new marriage group, the further accommodations involved in the birth and growth of children, the nature of the sex life, the economic administration of a household, etc. Along with the giving of information would go the cultivation of attitudes and sentiments which would go to make up the sorts of persons who might reasonably be expected to make the adjustments required in married life.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Collect newspaper clippings pertaining to divorces. Mount these on sheets of paper, labeling each clipping with date and name of paper in which published. Note the number, space, location, and sensationalism of these items in various papers.
2. Attend a session of court in which a divorce case is being heard. Write a report covering, among others, the following items:
  - a. Attitudes displayed in court room by judge, attorneys, parties to the suit, spectators
  - b. Time consumed



- c. Character of evidence introduced and witnesses called
- d. Efforts to promote welfare of husband, wife, children
3. Write abstracts of the laws of your state which pertain to marriage and divorce. For purposes of comparison, write similar abstracts of the laws of one or more other states. Note particularly the ease and conditions under which one may contract marriage or secure a divorce.
4. Collect statistics on marriage and divorce in your home district and state. Show the absolute number by race, nationality, place of residence and sex of applicant. Work out the ratio to the general population and to the number of marriages in a given year. Secure similar statistics from other districts and states for purposes of comparison.
5. If a divorce has occurred among your personal acquaintances describe the circumstances. What became of the husband? Wife? Children?
6. Collect statements from various persons indicating their attitude toward divorce. Interview persons of several different religious, national, and economic groups.

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## CHAPTER IV

### DESERTION AND NON-SUPPORT

In the preceding chapter we examined divorce, which is an attempt to solve the personal problems involved in a domestic situation which it seems impossible to continue. We were not concerned with labeling divorce "good" or "bad," but with understanding its use by unadjusted husbands and wives as a form of accommodation. In this chapter we shall attempt a similar analysis of desertion and non-support. We shall see that desertion, like divorce, is usually an effort to escape from a difficult family situation. When attempts to overcome troubles at home fail there is always the possibility of withdrawing from the domestic circle either by the legal device, divorce, or by the informal device, desertion. Much less study has been devoted to non-support, which is not so much a case of running away from trouble as it is of giving up the struggle. The attitude of the non-supporter appears to be very much like that of the child who, in the face of difficulty, simply stops trying. It is less frequently and less obviously a conscious attempt at accommodation than is either desertion or divorce.

#### THE NEWTON FAMILY <sup>1</sup>

One spring morning Mrs. Newton came to the office of the Family Welfare Society to say that the furniture she and her husband were buying on the installment plan had been taken away because of failure to make payments. Only a mattress, some bedding and a monkey stove had been

<sup>1</sup> This is the summary of a record in the files of a family welfare society. Needless to say, all names and other obviously identifying data have been changed or eliminated.

left. She had two young children and needed a place to stay. She also said that her husband was most unreasonable and she feared he would insist on her sleeping at home on the floor. She was tired of much moving—they had in one year lived in four different cities, and the following year at not less than six different addresses in the same city. This was, of course, not a desirable life for the children and it must have been very hard for Mrs. Newton. Later it developed that Mr. Newton was “twisted mentally” and had been treated for a venereal disease.

*Mr. Newton*, aged 38, was a thin, sentimental type of man, apparently capable of supporting his family, but possessed by *Wanderlust* and not at all a good provider. He was reported to be insanely jealous of his wife and accused her of immorality. However, there never was any evidence to support his charge. He had been married once before and divorced. The suit for divorce had been brought by Mr. Newton, who complained that his wife “had a violent temper, constantly nagged him, kept an unsanitary home and made his life generally unbearable,” so that two years before he had left her. The then Mrs. Newton was served with the usual papers, but she did not appear in court to contest the case. There is now no way of finding out the real facts about this previous marriage—whether it was the principal factor in spoiling Mr. Newton’s later life, or whether he himself was even then the chief offender.

Very soon after securing his divorce Mr. Newton went on a visit to the country where he met and married his present wife. Mrs. Newton was then just sixteen years old. It appears that along with the other girls of the neighborhood she was dazzled by Mr. Newton’s city ways. The other girls, perhaps a bit jealous of his attention to Jennie—for that was her name—taunted her that he would never marry her. So, just to prove that she could “land” him, she married Mr. Newton, although she herself afterward stated that she had no love for him then or later.

They went to the city to live where he began to mistreat her in various ways—striking her, threatening further violence and deserting. For this she had him arrested. He



was examined by an alienist who offered him the choice of staying away from his wife or going to a hospital for the insane. He promised to stay away, but repeatedly tried to have her live with him, which she did from time to time. While in this city a humane society and an employment bureau made great efforts to straighten out the difficulties in the Newton family.

After wandering about, frequently stranded in strange cities without money, failing to provide necessary food and clothing, Mr. Newton brought his wife and child to the city mentioned at the beginning of this story. Here he undertook to buy a home, but was unable to make the payments. He got furniture on the installment plan; this was taken away for the same reason. After that he moved from one cheap rooming house to another. He made his wife put the youngster of three in a box while she went with him to an amusement park to sell balloons. He beat her and the boy, took no interest in his clothes, did not pay his debts, and made a general nuisance of himself. When his relatives were heard from, they reported that Mr. Newton had not been normal mentally for a number of years. He always had a *Wanderlust* and never assumed any responsibility for his aged mother.

*Mrs. Newton* lived in a rural district in the South until at the age of sixteen she married Mr. Newton. She had five sisters and one brother all of whom did hard work on the farm and got very little schooling. Her father had very little money, but there was always plenty to eat and she dressed as well as any of the girls in the neighborhood. On Sunday they never failed to go to church, in which they all took great pleasure. She had never seen a train until after her marriage. The story of her courtship, marriage and subsequent life has already been told.

*Children.*—When Mrs. Newton appealed to the Family Welfare Society in the second city mentioned, she had two children, aged three years and six weeks respectively. They were not properly clothed and did not receive the right food. The older of the two was treated roughly by his father and was fast becoming a badly behaved child.

*Relatives.*—Not much beyond a few simple details is known about the relatives of either Mr. or Mrs. Newton. Her people, as stated, were simple country folk without much money or education. But they were said to be healthy and well respected in their home district.

Mr. Newton's mother, a woman of 75, was living with his sister in another state. These were people of small means but of some intelligence. A brother of Mr. Newton's was principal of a high school in a distant state. He gave helpful information, but because of his own large family was not able to offer financial assistance. A cousin of Mr. Newton's, Mrs. Otter, had a rooming house in a small city several hundred miles away. She cared for Mrs. Newton during her second confinement and was willing to give her a home, if only the man could be kept away.

*Social Treatment.*—When Mrs. Newton first asked for help, arrangements were made for her to go with the children to an institution giving temporary care to women and children. Instead, however, she stayed with a neighbor a night or two until the Family Welfare Society enabled her to rent a furnished room.

Suit was then brought through the Legal Aid Bureau for separate maintenance and the Court ordered Mr. Newton to stay away from his family, but pay \$40 a month for their support. After trying unsuccessfully to get this order set aside and turning over very little money, he left the city and was not heard from for several months. Then he wrote the probation officer, through whom he had been ordered to make payments to his wife, that he was willing to buy clothing for the children. Later he returned to the city and went to see his family, but was not allowed to live with them.

In the meantime, the Family Welfare Society was paying Mrs. Newton's rent and buying groceries. It also provided a baby buggy and some other necessities. For a short time she stayed at the institution referred to above. Later she worked in a laundry, leaving her children at a day nursery, and for several weeks did not need financial assistance.

Because Mr. Newton was believed to have a venereal dis-



ease, Mrs. Newton and the children were given Wassermann tests at the City Hospital. Nothing significant was revealed by these tests, but the children's health was looked after in other respects through a child welfare station. The older boy had a tonsillectomy at another hospital.

It is interesting to note the number of agencies that have cooperated in dealing with this family. In the first city there were the humane society, employment bureau, court, and alienist. In the second city the Family Welfare Society gave general oversight and material relief, the Legal Aid Bureau handled Mrs. Newton's case in court, the Juvenile Court awarded custody of the children to her, the Probation Department was supposed to collect from Mr. Newton, the children and their mother stayed a few days at an institution, the City Hospital Out-Patient Department examined Mrs. Newton and the children, a child welfare station supervised the children's health, another hospital arranged a tonsillectomy, a day nursery cared for the youngsters while their mother worked. Mr. Newton, on his own initiative, took his troubles to a society dealing with homeless men. But learning through the Confidential Exchange that the Family Welfare Society was looking after the family, this society took no action. Here we have definite record of the participation of 14 agencies, not counting the Confidential Exchange, which is of great importance in such a case as this.

This is very plainly "unfinished business." Mrs. Newton has a job; the children are being cared for in a day nursery. Mr. Newton is supposed to be staying away and paying \$40 a month. But he is doing neither. His mental health is not receiving attention, nor are measures being taken to enforce the court order.

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For ordinary purposes we may define a deserter as a man (or woman) who runs off and leaves his family to shift for itself. A non-supporter is one who sits about the home and lets others maintain it. Usually the non-supporter displays less courage and initiative than the

deserter. He is likely to have less physical and mental stamina. Often he has a sentimental attachment to his family but shirks his responsibility. Frequently he is alcoholic and almost always he is industrially inefficient. The deserter is likewise a shirker, but with a roving disposition. He is apt to be more vigorous and aggressive, a man of higher intelligence and greater industrial skill. "With the deserter as described, the problem is chiefly to alter his point of view; with the non-supporter it is, in addition, to stiffen his will and to increase his capacity—a far more complicated task."<sup>2</sup> Mr. Newton was both a non-supporter and a deserter. When at home he did not provide for his wife and children, and frequently he did not even stay at home. He was evidently suffering from some nervous and mental disease, traceable, perhaps, to his syphilis.

**Types of Deserters.**—However, it must not be imagined that all family deserters and non-supporters present mental symptoms as serious as those of Mr. Newton. Some of the deserters, at least, seem to be quite "normal" persons. In fact there is a great variety of types of deserters. From one point of view, each case is different from all others. However, they may be grouped into several more or less definite classes with similar characteristics. Eubank<sup>3</sup> makes a five-fold classification: (1) The "spurious deserter," who does not really abandon his family at all, but merely pretends to, in order that they may secure charitable aid. This type is in part a direct product of unwise relief, and with the improvement of social case work has become relatively rare. (2) The "gradual deserter," whose largely unpremeditated abandonment of his family grows out of a series of prolonged separations entailed by the nature of his occupation or other necessary circumstances. This type is most prevalent among casual laborers who, often forced to leave home for long periods in search of work, gradually drift away from their families; and among immigrants

<sup>2</sup> Colcord, Joanna, *Broken Homes*, pp. 151-152.

<sup>3</sup> Eubank, E. E., *A Study of Family Desertion*, pp. 37-49.



who leave their families in Europe intending to send for them when financially able. Frequently when this time comes they have so grown away from their wives and children and have become so used to freedom from domestic responsibilities that they fail to send for them at all. If they do, they find that their standards and attitudes have so changed that they do not care longer to maintain the relationship. (3) The "intermittent husband" characterized by an excessive lack of responsibility. This type is subdivided into (a) the "periodic deserters" some of whom leave home more or less regularly at the approach of winter, others of spring. Another peculiar periodic deserter is the one who leaves home at the time of his wife's confinement—the so-called "pregnancy deserter." (b) The "temperamental deserter" who, less regular in his departures than the first, leaves home after a quarrel or a spree or in response to a fit of *Wanderlust* or discouragement. (4) The "ill-advised marriage type," in which desertion grows out of unsatisfactory marital relations following hasty or forced marriages, or marriages of convenience. "Probably the largest number of permanent desertions are traceable to ill-advised marriages." (5) The "last resort type"—"men who have really tried in many ways to adjust themselves to a difficult family situation and have failed." Married life having become unendurable, desertion seems the only door open. Desertions of this type in many cases might well be termed "the poor man's divorce," being considered and often constituting a final and complete termination of the marriage relation.

**Numbers of Deserters.**—Statistical data on desertion are fragmentary at best because of the large number of wives who for various reasons are unwilling to make known the fact of having been abandoned. Existing statistics deal only with those who have come in contact with the courts or other social agencies. But the data we have are significant in a number of respects. "Hardly any statistical figure in the work of family social agencies shows so little fluctuation from year to year and between different cities,

as the percentage of deserted families. It generally forms from 10 to 15 per cent of the work of any such society.”<sup>4</sup> Data from a large number of widely separated cities bear out this assertion. Statistics from the Domestic Division of the Municipal Court of Philadelphia<sup>5</sup> from 1916 to 1920 showed that there came into court each year an average of 10 new desertion cases for every 1,000 families in the city. The ratio of new desertion cases to marriages was approximately one to five. About 15 per cent of 10,000 institutional children in Philadelphia had been deserted by one or both parents. From 20 to 25 per cent of the children committed as public wards to private orphan asylums in New York City and elsewhere are the children of deserting fathers.<sup>6</sup>

**Consequences of Family Desertion.**—Practically all of the difficulties incident to widowhood and divorce are present in intensified form in the case of the deserted wife with small children, and the demoralization which sometimes results is in many respects the same. The struggle to support the family is often much more severe because, while widows frequently receive pensions and divorced mothers alimony, there is often no aid of this kind for deserted wives. Only about half the states provide that pensions may be given to them. Even where permitted, there is a decided reluctance on the part of authorities to grant these pensions for fear of collusion or that they may prove an incentive to other husbands to desert. Hence a large number are forced to apply for charitable aid. Many deserted mothers in attempting to provide for their children work for meager wages outside the home. The children are in consequence often undernourished, neglected and without parental supervision. Truancy and juvenile delinquency frequently result. “An unstable home, with a worthless father an intermittent member of the household, is as bad an environment as children can have—its very fluctuations making for nervous instability and a wrong

<sup>4</sup> Colcord, *op. cit.*, p. 52.

<sup>5</sup> Patterson, S. H., in *Jour. Del.* 7: 258-262.

<sup>6</sup> Liebman. Walter H., in *Soc. Hyg.*, 6: 201.



point of view later on.”<sup>7</sup> There are practically certain to be grave deficiencies in the development of the children. Wrong conceptions of marriage and family life are fostered by the conduct of the father. Child labor with its demoralizing effects is often present. But frequently the greatest demoralization occurs in the deserting father. Homeless, unattached, free from primary-group controls, his history frequently is one of progressive deterioration.

The fact must not be overlooked that desertion may sometimes have beneficial effects. Where the man has been also a non-supporter and an additional burden to his family or a drunkard given to much abuse, his departure may be a relief and the family better off. Such would have been the case with the Newton family had the husband actually stayed away. The desertion would have made possible a reorganization of their scheme of life by Mrs. Newton and the children.

**Some Causes of Desertion.**—Various studies indicate that the causal factors involved in desertion and divorce are practically the same. Both are endeavors to resolve a maladjustment in domestic life. The question of which will be resorted to seems largely to be a matter of which one is most familiar and which one is most likely to find support in the sentiments of the group. Eubank<sup>8</sup> regards desertion, in many cases at least, as “the poor man’s divorce,” because it is easy, effective, cheap, without marked social stigma in the classes among whom desertions usually occur, and because it permits the patching up of family difficulties should the deserter ever care to return. Miss Colcord questions this position on the ground that “the deserting man does not, as a rule, consider his absences from home as anything so final and definite as divorce.”<sup>9</sup> She suggests that desertion instead of being a poor man’s divorce comes nearer to being his vacation. Reference to the classification of types of deserters indicates that either may be true. While for most classes it partakes more of

<sup>7</sup> Colcord, *op. cit.*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>8</sup> Eubank, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-19.

<sup>9</sup> Colcord, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

the nature of a vacation, in the "last resort" type it is closely analogous to divorce.

The same is probably true when the wife deserts, which is relatively much less frequent. She is restrained by maternity and a greater attachment to the children, economic dependence, more subjection to social conventions and the control of primary groups. Desertion is not as convenient for her as for the husband.

A study in Philadelphia<sup>10</sup> in 1918 showed that while the proportion of desertion and non-support cases coming into court was relatively low among unskilled laborers and professional folk, it was very high among the skilled and semi-skilled workers. But this does not necessarily indicate a more unstable family life in these groups. Divorce occurs more often on the higher economic and social levels, and on the other hand many desertions doubtless occur among the lower economic groups which never come into court.

There seems to be no direct relationship between low incomes and desertion. Patterson<sup>11</sup> did find an inverse ratio between economic prosperity and desertion, but states that the correlation was not marked. It seems to be pretty generally agreed that poverty is not an important factor. Herzberg found among the families served by the United Hebrew Charities of Philadelphia that as the proportion of unemployment increased the proportion of desertion fell off. "In other words men do not desert their wives because of industrial conditions; they very rarely desert them because of unemployment."<sup>12</sup>

It has often been suspected that among the important causes of desertion were early marriage, forced marriage and marriage on short acquaintance. We have, however, been unable to find much evidence to support this belief. Patterson suggests that the frequency with which these factors appear in deserted families may be little, if any, greater than in families which are not so disrupted.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Patterson, in *Jour. Del.*, 7: 278.

<sup>11</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p. 264.

<sup>12</sup> Herzberg, Max, in *Philadelphia City Club Bulletin*, Feb. 12, 1913, quoted by Patterson, *loc. cit.*, p. 266.

<sup>13</sup> Patterson, *loc. cit.*, pp. 299-303.



**Personal Factors.**—It is important, though difficult, to distinguish between the underlying causes of a given desertion and the conscious motives in the mind of the deserter. Among the latter may be the expectation of finding work elsewhere, the thought of escaping irritations and perplexities, infatuation for another woman, and belief that he could make good in a new environment. Back of these there are always other situations, of which the deserter may not be conscious, but which are among the real sources of the difficulty.

Mental defect accompanied by industrial inefficiency, poor housekeeping, and lack of self-control may be an important factor. Mental disorders of various sorts are frequently found, as in the case of Mr. Newton. Of fundamental importance are faults in early training, giving rise to low ideals of home life and of personal obligation, lack of self-control and ability to meet responsibilities. Differences in social background contribute to the probability of desertion, as when husband and wife belong to different racial, national, religious or age groups or when the husband migrates to a new country several years before his wife. Ill-advised marriages such as those discussed in the previous chapter—hasty, mercenary, common-law, and forced marriages—are the source of unadjustments that may be resolved through desertion. Patterson found that 14 per cent of the cases of desertion and non-support in the Philadelphia court occurred in families where there had been “forced” marriages. But over against these figures should be put the results of a study of 500 women who were not deserted.<sup>14</sup> Of these, 96 or 19 per cent, had conceived before wedlock.

Educational deficiencies including lack of preparation for married life and a lack of industrial training are of importance. The husband's lack of success in an occupation and his being engaged in a trade at which he can work wherever he goes, or in seasonal or irregular work, tend to encourage desertion; as do the wife's willingness and ability to earn or her failure as a housewife through laziness.

<sup>14</sup> Colcord, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

ness, lack of interest or skill. Friction over the handling of money, especially the wasteful spending habits of the wife, sometimes leads to desertion. Sickness, resulting in lowered vitality, despondency, irregular work and financial burdens may be a factor. Temperamental differences manifested in standards of conduct, disagreements about the bringing up of children, nagging, petty criticism, jealousy, sulking spells, and quarrels are also found. Closely related to these is sex incompatibility, including coldness or excessive demands. Studies now under way indicate that this factor plays a larger rôle than any we have yet named. However, more definite assertions concerning it must await the outcome of further research. Finally must be mentioned various habits such as sexual immorality, alcoholism, use of narcotic drugs and gambling.

**Group Influences.**—In addition to factors appearing within the immediate family, or the “marriage group” as Thomas calls it, there are causes which operate from without. Among these are the interference of relatives, the mobility of city life and social attitudes toward marriage. Difficulties which center about the mother-in-law are proverbial; the meddling of other “in-laws” is less notorious, but no less real. Very marked is the influence of city life. Desertion seems to be predominately an urban problem, because of the absence of primary-group attachments and the consequent lessening of the restraint of the mores, the anonymity of the individual, the breakdown of the economic basis of the family and the spirit of discontent which characterizes city life. The tendency of the husband to secure his recreation apart from his family and the conscious or unconscious influence of his companions must also be mentioned. The attitude of the community toward matrimony—especially the tendency to ridicule marriage through “comic” supplements, movies, “bedroom farces,” etc.—must have its effect on the conduct of young people. Community standards in the administration of civil marriage and of divorce represent another phase of this problem. The attitudes of the racial or national group from which the individual comes, toward the sanctity of marriage, the



position of woman, etc., are very important in determining his attitude on family matters. The practice of deserting families with the expectation that they will be cared for through charitable aid is probably not as frequent as formerly, due to greater discrimination in dispensing such relief.

**Social Case Work With Deserters and Their Families.**—Procedure in desertion cases illustrates three stages in the development of social case work. (1) First there was what Miss Richmond<sup>15</sup> calls the “muddling-along” period in which there was indiscriminate relief of families and sporadic efforts to locate the man. (2) This was followed by a punitive period in which efforts were directed toward punishing the deserter through passing stringent laws and seeking extradition. Thus Eubank<sup>16</sup> makes the first step in the treatment of the deserter securing a warrant for his arrest, followed by his location and apprehension, return to jurisdiction, and conviction. After these may come court order to support the family, often accompanied by probation or the filing of a bond, imprisonment and perhaps payment to the family of wages earned while serving sentence, the imposing of a fine or possibly reconciliation. However, genuine reconciliation is difficult after criminal proceedings have been initiated. A warrant for arrest is equivalent to a declaration of war. (3) With the growing realization of the complexity of causes that give rise to desertion these repressive and punitive measures have been largely abandoned. Cases are taken into court only as a last resort. There has been developed a philosophy and a technique of social case work, an attempt to help people in and through their social relations. “Briefly, then, changes in the social worker’s attitude toward treatment have meant less emphasis on punitive and repressive measures, more consideration of the man’s point of view, less tendency to press court action, at least in the beginning, fewer commitments of children, a more liberal relief policy (partly as a preventive of ‘forced reconciliations’), and

<sup>15</sup> In Preface to Colcord, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Eubank, *op. cit.*, pp. 51-63.

lastly, longer supervision after the man has resumed support of his family.”<sup>17</sup>

The treatment of desertion involves two distinct but closely related groups of problems, those of the deserter and those of the deserted wife or family; an adequate plan of treatment must include both. “The deserter though absent, is still not only a potential but also a real factor in the family situation. The plans of the family are often made with one eye to his return; he is the unseen but plainly felt obstacle to much that the social worker wants to accomplish. In short he is usually at the key point in the situation. The discovery of the deserter’s whereabouts is not only the first but the most urgent of the problems that confront the worker who tries to deal with a deserted family. Unless he can be found the whole plan rests upon shifting sand.”<sup>18</sup> Hence there is need of a prompt, vigorous and continuous effort to find him. When found, instead of antagonizing him at once by arrest and prosecution, it is wise to hold an interview and hear his side of the story. Friendly contacts are an advantage, but it is also important to make a thorough investigation of all phases of the difficulty, both from his angle and from that of the wife.

Of course, “circumstances alter cases.” Hence there can be no rigid rules of procedure. Where the desertion is of recent date emergency plans must be formulated for the care of the family, including prompt and adequate relief and medical or other services as needed, while an energetic search is being made for the deserter. The question of whether or not the home should be broken up and the children committed should be decided on other grounds than desertion alone. Where the desertion has extended over a period of years, more definite and comprehensive plans may be made for the family, leaving the deserter completely out of account. However, unless his death is established, there is always the possibility of his reappearance. Divorce on the ground of desertion may be a desirable step in many cases. When the deserter is found and is willing

<sup>17</sup> Colcord, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-64.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.



to return or if he returns voluntarily, the principal question is whether it is wise to allow him to re-enter the home. In some cases reconciliation does not promise much. It may even be necessary to prevent him from forcing himself upon his family. This may be accomplished through court order for separate support, giving the wife a warrant for his arrest which may be served if he appears in the home, or through legal separation, or divorce. When the deserter is unwilling to return or to support his family, court action is often necessary, involving perhaps arrest, extradition, prosecution, etc.

**Courts of Domestic Relations.**—The laws of practically every state make both desertion and non-support punishable offenses, in some states misdemeanors, in others felonies; the difference being largely one of the penalties inflicted. In most places these cases are heard by the ordinary criminal courts, but in a considerable number of cities they are heard by the specialized courts of domestic relations or family courts referred to in the last chapter. In a typical family court the case is usually handled by social workers in the probation department. Both sides of the story are heard, careful investigations are made, a record of the facts made and, if it seems advisable, a conference held between husband and wife in the presence of the probation officer. In this conference reconciliation may begin, or a voluntary separation agreement may be reached which, with the signature of the judge, becomes a decree of the court and is legally binding. If such an adjustment cannot be reached, a legal summons is issued and the case brought into court where the disposition may be: to dismiss the case altogether, to continue for further investigation, to place the man under definite court order to contribute a specified amount weekly for the support of his wife and children, including an order in some cases to return home and in others to stay away from home, this being accompanied by probation, or commitment to jail or workhouse for a period of time.

**National Desertion Bureau.**—There are many agencies in addition to those mentioned which deal with family

desertion. Among these are outdoor relief departments, mother's pension bureaus, family welfare societies, children's protective societies, and children's institutions. One other organization, nationwide in its scope, has had such remarkable success as to demand somewhat fuller mention. This is the National Desertion Bureau, a legal-aid organization, established in 1911 by the National Conference of Jewish Charities. The methods followed include the publishing of photographs and stories of desertion in co-operating Jewish newspapers in New York, Chicago, Montreal, and Toronto, the establishment of a net-work of several hundred cooperating social agencies throughout the country which investigate desertion cases among the relatives, friends, fellow employes, etc., of deserters, and the establishment of a national body of correspondents and attorneys who handle inquiries from the Bureau and represent applicants before the courts whenever necessary. The procedure involves interviews with the wife and husband, investigation of homes, economic and social conditions, attempted reconciliation where this seems desirable, arrangement for support based on the earning capacity of the husband and, for obstinate and vicious offenders utterly lacking in a sense of responsibility, placing the case before the court. There is also a scheme for following up the results obtained in individual cases.

**What of Prevention?**—Ordinarily desertion and non-support are thought of as legal and economic problems. We have preferred to emphasize the sociological problems involved. In other words, while we do not ignore the fact that the deserter has violated a law and has left his family in financial straits, we are more concerned with the fact that he is an unadjusted person seeking escape from a difficult family situation. We have seen that his departure from the home sometimes brings relief to all concerned. Sometimes it is only the husband who finds satisfaction; the abandoned family being in greater mental and economic distress than before. Sometimes at his going the wife and children are released from a state of nervous tension, while the man may fail to find the relief he seeks.



Probably in most cases nobody is satisfied with the state of affairs brought about by a desertion. Hence instead of solving the original difficulty, desertion tends to leave behind a chronic state of family disorganization and personal maladjustment. It is for this reason that we are interested in the possibility of preventing family desertion through the control of underlying causes by some such measures as were discussed in the preceding chapter.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Collect statistics on desertion and non-support in your home district and state. Prepare tables showing the absolute numbers in each of several years, and the ratio for the members of different racial, national, religious and economic groups. Secure comparative data from other districts and states.
2. Visit an agency which is affiliated with the National Desertion Bureau and report on:
  - a. Its method of locating deserters
  - b. Provision for deserted families
  - c. Methods used in bringing about reconciliation or separate maintenance
3. Discover the attitudes of local officials (police, courts, probation officers) and private agencies toward the problems of desertion and non-support. Interview such persons and so far as possible include their original statements in your report. Seek and record answers to the following questions:
  - a. Do they really try to find deserters?
  - b. What proportion of cases is dismissed?
  - c. Are court orders enforced?
  - d. From what sources is relief provided for deserted families? Is it adequate?
4. If a case of desertion or non-support has appeared among your personal acquaintances, write a report of the circumstances preceding, accompanying and following the family break-down. Note especially matters of finance, health, and personality. What intervention, if any, was there from public officials or social workers in private agencies?
5. Compare the laws of your own with those of at least one other state in so far as they pertain to desertion and non-support. Prepare a written abstract including definition of terms, penalties, procedure, officials responsible for enforcement.

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## CHAPTER V

### CHILDREN WITHOUT PARENTAL CARE

Each of the case summaries we have presented so far has involved some break in the usual parent-child relationship. Kenneth McGregor's father mistreated him and then deserted. However, he was not entirely without masculine influence in the home, for his grandfather came to live with them. The Jenkins children suffered an irreparable loss in the death of their father. We cannot tell what direct influence he would have had; indirectly he would have meant much to them by "steadyding" Mrs. Jenkins. The Haynes baby is still too young for us to estimate the effects of her mother's divorce and remarriage. The Newton children not only have no parental care while their mother is at work, but they are also learning to despise and perhaps to hate their father.

#### THE MEAD CHILDREN

One cold day in January several years ago, Mr. John Mead drove an old Ford car into the city bringing his crippled brother and six children. They settled in two rooms furnished with two beds, a baby crib and a few odds and ends. Then the two men set out to look for work. First they tried a social agency which had an employment bureau and were put to work in the organization's own quarry. Here they could not earn enough, so they were sent to the Family Welfare Society. Mr. Mead's wife had died a few months before and he was having considerable difficulty in caring for the children. Although he was "nearly broke," he asked only for employment. The crippled brother, Andrew, was doing the housework and the two little girls were in a day nursery.

*Mr. Mead*, aged 40, was in good health, slender but wiry. He was born and reared in a southern state, where he received very little schooling. He did not get beyond the second grade. He was ambitious, energetic, a steady and hard worker and devoted to his family. But he was indulgent and lax with the children, and not a good manager when he had funds.

He had been a farmer and was at one time supervisor of county roads. He borrowed about \$3,500 and bought road machinery costing \$8,500. His gross income was sometimes as high as \$180 a day. But after the current funds for road-building were exhausted no new appropriation was voted. *Mr. Mead* had to sell his machinery at a loss. About this time *Mrs. Mead* died in child-birth. This combination of events was too much for *Mr. Mead* and marked the beginning of the family's disorganization.

Previously there had been plenty of money and no one was very careful about its expenditure. Now the income stopped; the physician and undertaker presented large bills. *Mr. Mead* paid part of his debts and went to a small town in another state where his two sisters lived. Here he opened a garage which his brother Robert took charge of. Business was poor, so *Mr. Mead* sold out again at a loss and went to a large city. Here he bought a fine automobile—for what purpose is not clear—which later proved to have been stolen. This was taken away and no reimbursement was given. It was then that he decided to come to the city where he now is, hoping to find work or some business opportunity. In less than a year this relatively well-to-do and happy family had become destitute and broken.

But even in his difficulties *Mr. Mead* did not give up. He proudly tried to get along without financial assistance and worked hard at a job which he presently found in a packing house. He was handicapped by lack of education and had no skilled trade, but within his limits made a very creditable showing as a workman. For over two years he managed to keep his family together except for the baby born two days before its mother died. This child was taken home by *Mrs. Mead's* brother and his wife. As time passed



and one difficulty followed another, Mr. Mead became somewhat discouraged and seemed to shirk his responsibilities, finally putting the children into three institutions. About a year after this Mr. Mead married again and took the two little girls out of the orphanage. But this second matrimonial venture was not a success. The new wife soon deserted, taking with her as much money as she could get. The home was again broken up. This time the girls were sent to relatives in another state.

*Andrew*, the crippled brother, was ten years younger than John. Their mother had died when he was quite small and he had lived with his brother ever since, or with his sister, Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Mead (the first wife, that is) did not like him, regarded him as a dependent, and would not allow the children to call him "Uncle Andrew." About eight years ago he was injured while "hopping" a train. Since then he had been more or less of a physical wreck. He had a fractured hip, kidney trouble and a painful spine. A thorough medical examination indicated that his condition would get worse unless he underwent a rather serious operation and then kept his hip in a cast for six months. This Andrew consented to do.

In the meantime he was cooking and doing the housework, picking up odd jobs and trying in every way possible to help his brother and the children. In contrast with John, he had finished the grade school and was fairly well read. He was bright, unselfish, frank, sensitive and showed a fine spirit of cooperation with the Family Welfare Society. But before arrangements could be made for his operation he became very much depressed and attempted suicide. The effort was thwarted by his two brothers. Andrew's physical condition was later much improved, but he displayed many symptoms of mental abnormality. After living another year with his brother John, Andrew went back to the South.

*Jennie*, aged 12, was in the sixth grade, doing average work, attending fairly regularly and not making any very definite impression on her teacher. To the social worker she was "bright, alert and lovable." She was reported

to be eight pounds underweight, but otherwise seemed quite healthy. While her mother lived, and her father had money, she was pampered and ill prepared for the life that was to follow. She did not learn to cook or do housework; she was allowed to write checks in her father's name. After the family's troubles began she found some difficulty in adjusting herself to the lower level of living and seemed never to have realized just how "hard up" they were. She was of little assistance in the home, but gradually learned to take more responsibility for her younger brothers and sisters. She later finished grammar school, went to work in a factory and then, aided by a scholarship, entered high school. When the home was finally broken up by putting the boys in one institution and the younger girls in another, Jennie, too, was sent to a Home for "problem girls" who are not delinquent. There she now is.

*Charles*, aged 10, was doing "medium" work in the third grade, being especially poor in writing. However his deportment and attendance were very good. He was reported to be "quiet, peaceful and likeable; fair in play." He is now with his two younger brothers in a children's institution.

*Walter*, aged 8, was in grade 2A, doing average work. He was said to be "well-behaved, quiet, clean, not mischievous." He is now in the children's institution with his brothers.

*Martin*, aged 6, was in grade 1B. His educational career was being started under rather unfavorable auspices. His scholarship was not good; he was inattentive and restless, stubborn, willful, teasing and mischievous, often disobedient. However, his attendance was good; he played truant only once and was very penitent afterward. Clearly he was suffering more than the older children from the disorganized home conditions. He is now in the children's institution with his brothers.

*Mabel*, aged 3, was being cared for at a day nursery. She had some trouble with her hearing which was partly remedied by a tonsilleectomy. Later she had measles, followed by pneumonia, from which she recovered satisfactorily.



She was neat, but somewhat spoiled. After several months in a children's institution (not the one that cares for her brothers) and a brief stay at home, Mabel went to live with relatives in another state.

*Mildred*, aged 2, was also in the day nursery. She was a healthy child, "affectionate, alert, bright, pampered." She has been with Mabel since they first left home.

*Baby* was taken after the mother's death into the home of Mrs. Mead's brother and his wife who live in the South. They were glad to give her a home, but did not expect to adopt her.

*Relatives.*—Robert Mead, aged 27, Mr. John Mead's youngest brother, went with him from the old home in the South, shared in the unsuccessful garage and preceded John to the city where they are now living. Both he and his wife were working and earning together as high as \$38 per week. For a time they lived in the same house with John and his family, and helped them in various ways. Then Robert and his wife separated, though they are said to be living together again.

Mrs. Mead's mother and step-father lived on a farm near the town where the garage venture was tried. Mr. Mead wanted her to take all six children while he was getting on his feet and claimed to have offered to pay their board. However, she refused for reasons unknown to us, and Mr. Mead became so indignant that he would have no more to do with her. Later she offered to take the two little girls on the condition that she might adopt them. This Mr. Mead naturally refused to permit. Mrs. Mead's brother has already been mentioned as caring for the baby.

Mr. Mead's two sisters were married and had large families. The one in whose home Andrew had stayed was a cripple. Her husband was a farmer. The husband of the other sister was an unskilled laborer. Both seemed willing to take at least part of the children, but at the time Mr. Mead hoped to avoid breaking up his family.

*Social Treatment.*—A number of health and social agencies cooperated in the effort to solve the problems which confronted this family. First the men's institution gave

John and Andrew work in its quarry. Then the day nursery took the little girls during the day. Later the head worker also accepted the older children outside of school hours, helped to find new living quarters, arranged for medical attention, employed Jennie and sent the younger girls to the country for a vacation. She was active throughout, in cooperation with other interested agencies, in planning and advising with the family.

As to employment, Mr. Mead found a position for himself in a packing house and kept it, with one brief intermission for which he was not responsible, until he became a strike-breaker for one of the railroads.

A club in a near-by church provided clothing and furniture, gave a "pantry shower" and a party for the children. This club worked in close cooperation with the day nursery and the Family Welfare Society.

Two clinics and the City Hospital helped with health problems. Andrew's care we have spoken of before. Mabel was in the hospital for tonsillectomy and later when she had pneumonia. Four of the children were in the isolation ward with mumps. All were examined at the clinic held at the day nursery.

The Agent of the State Rehabilitation Bureau advised with Andrew about his work and secured a position for him.

A school visitor secured a scholarship for Jennie when she entered high school.

The Family Welfare Society, along with the day nursery, kept in close touch with the family, advising about the care of the children, living quarters, diet, budget. The visitor helped to find rooms, which often was not easy for so large a family. She also tried repeatedly to secure a housekeeper for Mr. Mead, but the women she found were either not fitted at all for the undertaking or would not live in the only quarters the Meads could afford. She talked Mr. Mead several times out of the notion of putting his children into institutions, but finally let him have his way.

Indeed, the difficulties in the way of keeping this family together were so great that the social workers came to feel



that they had been attempting the impossible and the home should have been broken up sooner. At all events, the three boys were sent to one institution, the two little girls to another and Jennie to a third. It was felt that Jennie had had too much freedom and needed discipline. Besides, something was greatly needed to offset some undesirable experiences in the rooming-house neighborhood where they lived. The other children might have done well in a foster home or homes, but none suitable were available at the time.

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The crisis in this family was precipitated by the close succession of Mrs. Mead's death and the expiration of Mr. Mead's contract for road building. His attempted accommodations included placement of the new baby with its uncle and aunt, negotiations with the grandparents for care of the other children, undertaking the garage business, moving to a northern city with the hope of securing employment and remarriage. Only the first of these seemed to contribute anything toward a solution of the family's difficulties. Hence the unadjustment became chronic and outside aid had to be sought. But even the efforts of trained social workers have failed as yet to effect a reorganization of the family life. Mr. Mead is disappointed and discouraged, but he has never lost his grip on things to the extent that would justify us in calling him demoralized. Jennie, though by no means vicious, is certainly an unadjusted girl. The two older boys experienced no violent upheaval; but the three younger children were "spoiled" and seem to have found some difficulty in accepting their new circumstances. Just what the family disruption meant to these six boys and girls is difficult for us to determine; but there was certainly loss of affection and of a sense of security.

It is especially interesting for us to contrast the situations of the Jenkins and the Mead families. Mr. Jenkins' death was very disconcerting to his wife and for a long time her behavior was erratic. But at no time did anyone

deem it necessary or desirable to break up the home and scatter its members. Mrs. Jenkins was regarded as the most suitable home-maker for her children. They must have missed their father a great deal, and confidence in their mother was often shaken. But they never lost their family spirit. Mrs. Mead's death, on the other hand, led to the physical separation of the members of the family. It was not possible for the father to combine the functions of bread-winner and home-maker, no matter how earnestly he tried. The uncle helped out and would have done more but for his physical and mental infirmities. But at best he could not take the mother's place. Moreover there was considerable friction between Andrew and Jennie. It was this general family disorganization rather than poverty alone which led to the placement of these children in institutions.

**Orphans, Half-orphans and Others.**—Whenever mention is made of children without parental care, of children's institutions or of home-finding societies, most people think of orphans as being primarily involved. But, as a matter of fact, orphans constitute a very small minority of children without parental care. Boys and girls like those in the Mead family are much more typical than are boys and girls both of whose parents have died. In a study made in Cleveland in 1920<sup>1</sup> it was found that out of 5000 children cared for in nineteen institutions, only 8 per cent were full orphans. Forty-five per cent were half-orphans and 47 per cent had both parents living. In a similar study in Kansas City, Kansas, still more striking results were secured. Out of 208 children, only 3 per cent were orphans and only 33 per cent half-orphans. The following figures, which are also taken from the Kansas City study, made by ourselves in 1923, shed further light on the variety of problems presented by "dependent" children.

<sup>1</sup> Cole, Lawrence C., in *Nat. Conf. Soc. Work*, 1922, pp. 150-151.



FAMILY STATUS OF CHILDREN IN FOUR  
INSTITUTIONS

Father dead .....	32
Mother dead .....	36
Both parents dead.....	7
Parents "separated" .....	49
Parents divorced .....	23
Deserted by father.....	27
Deserted by mother.....	10
Parents not married.....	4
Father in jail.....	8
Children removed by court.....	3
Sickness in home.....	7
Mother working .....	2
<hr/>	
Total .....	208

In considering situations such as the above we shall concentrate our attention now on the loss of parental care, reserving for later treatment such factors as neglect, abuse, waywardness, physical or mental handicap.

**Two Hundred and Fifty Thousand Children Without Parental Care.**—Preliminary figures released by the Bureau of the Census state that there were in the care of institutions and other agencies in the United States on February 1, 1923, a total of 252,089 children. From figures such as these it is difficult to know what conclusions we are justified in drawing. Evidently all these children were for some reason or other deprived of parental care, but it is likely that many of them presented other problems of more significance. However, we need not assume that the number of children "without parental care" was smaller than that given, simply because some of them may have been abused, crippled, feeble-minded or wayward. As a matter of fact, there is no such thing as a merely dependent child. He is always part of a family situation which involves a combination of difficulties to be met. Instead of the Census figures being too high, it is probable that they are very much too low. Thus the Census Bureau reported for Kansas on the date indicated, approximately 2,000 children in the care of various agencies. At the same time the

Bureau of Child Research at the State University, estimated that there were between 5,000 and 7,000 such children. The classification which follows indicates why the Census figures are incomplete.

### KANSAS CHILDREN WITHOUT PARENTAL CARE

#### *Estimated Number in 1923*

Residing in state and private children's homes...	1,100 to 1,200
In foster homes, under some supervision from the placing agencies .....	1,000 to 1,500
In foster homes, without supervision, and mostly without existing or available records of whereabouts .....	3,000 to 4,000
Total .....	5,100 to 6,700

There is little doubt that what is true of Kansas is true of most of the other states, namely, that large numbers of children are placed in foster homes without record and without supervision. These children represent on the whole a much more serious problem for society than do those in the care of reputable agencies. Hence, we must admit that the real extent of our problem is unknown to us. We can be certain that the figure 250,000, is a minimum, with the possibility that there are as many as a million children deprived of parental care in the United States. The more exact discovery and statement of these numbers is a task for some enterprising social statistician.

**Why There Are So Many.**—The figures quoted from the Kansas City study suggest some reasons why children are deprived of parental care, but these and the other reasons usually enumerated only push the inquiry back one step. It is necessary to explain why these various situations obtain and in some instances just why they should involve the separation of parents and children. Hence, anything like an adequate answer to the question, why there are so many children living apart from their parents, must include answers to such questions as these: Why do the parents of young children die? Why do parents separate? Why



is it hard for one parent to make a home for his or her young children? Why do parents desert their children? Why do they offer them for adoption? Some of these problems have been dealt with in preceding chapters and others will be considered later. All that we shall undertake to do here, therefore, is to indicate some of the inter-relations between loss of parental care and other disturbing factors.

To some people it may seem a sufficient explanation to say that certain children are without parental care because of death; but, as we pointed out in the chapter on widowhood, such a statement represents merely the beginning of our inquiry. Death in turn is variously due to such misfortunes as industrial accidents, tuberculosis, pneumonia, ignorance, poverty. Each of these needs to be accounted for in its relation to the others and to the disorganization of family life. Similarly, when we specify separation of parents as a cause, we have merely restated our problem. In the chapters on divorce and desertion we have called attention to some of the many and varied factors which may be involved in this apparently simple phenomenon. It is not even enough to work back to a statement in terms of such things as hasty and ill-advised marriage, easy escape from marriage, or "selfishness in men and peevishness in women." Each of these is a challenge to further research.

When we come to the relinquishment or desertion of children, we have perhaps a still more difficult situation to explain. Sometimes the root of the difficulty appears to be economic. A widowed mother, for example, finds that she has not the money to support her little children. But this raises the question, is it wise to permit her home to be further broken simply for lack of funds, and why does a supposedly civilized people permit such separations when a modest financial supplement would render them unnecessary? Sometimes the difficulty seems not to be so much economic as personal, as was the case with the Mead family.

When we pass from parents who appear to be attached to their children, to those who display little if any interest

in them, a host of questions arise. Is that readiness to be rid of one's children due primarily to some mental abnormality, or perhaps to a sense of disgrace as in the case of an unmarried mother? Is it due to an interest in "society" or a career; or is the explanation to be found in the group sentiments of the parents' families or social milieu? The records of social case working agencies indicate that all these factors appear from time to time and in various combinations. One causal factor which is not generally recognized, but which we are convinced is very real and widely influential, is the presence of a large number of institutions and other agencies, many of which have low standards of work. The very fact that there is an institution nearby, which receives children without asking embarrassing questions, is itself a temptation to parents to escape their responsibilities, especially when for other reasons they have no very strong attachment to their children. To not a few of these agencies, as well as to private foster homes, parents bring their children, pay board for a short time and then disappear. In other cases they do not drop out of sight, but having discovered how easy it is to get along without the children, they gradually lose their affection and their sense of responsibility. Behind all this is a social attitude of sentimentally approving any organization which professes to be "doing good." Such ignorance on the part of the general public leaves the way open for those who wish to start an institution either as a means of making their own living or for the glorification of some religious or fraternal organization.

**Effects on the Child's Personality.**—One of the most immediate consequences of widowhood is that the children are deprived either of the father's or the mother's influence and participation in the family life. In the story of the Mead family we saw what this meant when it was the mother who passed from the family circle, and how serious this loss of the mother was to the oldest girl, Jennie. In the story of the Jenkins family we got a glimpse of what it meant to children to lose their father. A very interesting illustration of the personal demoralization which may ac-



company this sort of break in the family life has been made available by Dr. Wile.<sup>2</sup>

Henry's father died a few years ago and he had generally come to regard himself as the head of the home. He was jealous of his mother's position and resented her domination. He believed himself—since he had more formal education than his mother—to have a riper judgment than she had for deciding family questions. He had attempted to discipline his brother along the lines made familiar by his own experience with his father. The brother resented this attempted domination and, naturally, appealed to the mother for protection. Her remonstrances irritated the boy and stirred him to revolt against her interference. . . .

. . . Nothing in the home pleased him, and despite his efforts, violent as they had sometimes been, there had been little improvement. The boy's development had been skewed by reason of the death of his father and the consequent lack of paternal guidance, instruction and discipline. The combination of poverty, the ignorance and preoccupation of the mother, with adolescent ideals and ambition had brought about a state of mind that is unusually volcanic.

The demoralizing influences in Henry's life had a cumulative effect, until finally he endeavored to usurp all authority by demonstrating his physical fitness to compel his widowed mother to do his bidding. . . .

When children whose home has been broken by death or desertion are placed in foster homes or institutions some surprising attitudes sometimes develop. An instance of this sort was presented by Miss Merrill to the All-Philadelphia Conference of Social Work in 1924.<sup>3</sup>

Carlotta's mother was deserted by her lazy, drunken husband when Carlotta was 14. There were five younger brothers and sisters. The standards of the home were poor. The social agency to which application was made felt that placement was desirable. There is no question about the fact that the children received better physical care than their own mother would have given them. But there were some counter-influences at work. It was difficult to find a satisfactory foster home for Carlotta. Sometimes the change of homes was not entirely due to her, but frequently she did bring about the shift—indirectly, by conduct-

<sup>2</sup> Wile, Ira S., in *Survey*, 51: 475, 1924.

<sup>3</sup> Merrill, Laura, *Where Shall Children Be Brought Up?* Family, 5: 224-227. The following summary is adapted from the story as told by Miss Merrill.

ing herself so that the foster mother asked for her removal. Through it all Carlotta came to have great faith in the social agency. After a time she married, but within three years she came to the office saying, "I've left my husband and I've come to you to make a plan for me." Her husband was very bitter against the social workers and blamed them for developing Carlotta's instability. He said, "Carlotta wants to be all the time moving. We no sooner get settled and I start up a business but what she wants to move to some other place or to do something different. She's never had to stick anything out. She could always go to the society and they'd change her to another place." To which Carlotta responded, "But you don't understand. I've got to have a change of environment."

This account makes one wonder whether in her mother's home, Carlotta might have developed a spirit of self-reliance and stability, which would have gone far toward offsetting "low" standards of housekeeping. However that may be, it is plain that this girl did acquire an undue dependence upon others for the security which one ordinarily seeks to provide for himself. Likewise her desire for variety and new experience was overstimulated. Hence she was never really adjusted in any situation after her father's desertion. In this chronic, unsettled state Carlotta was truly demoralized.

Finally there is the danger of loss of social status. When a child loses his sense of recognition and backing which comes from belonging to loving, intelligent parents, he is likely to lose confidence in himself and to develop a feeling that he is not wanted. The lack of parents and a natural home marks him off as different from other children and may create a situation in which the child becomes bitter and resentful. This resentment is likely to be a cloak for his sense of inferiority. Other manifestations of this loss of social status are suggested by the behavior of William Jenkins who was unwilling to admit that his father was dead and by the delinquency of a small colored boy described by Dr. Healy.<sup>4</sup> This boy learned in a roundabout way that he had been adopted, but when he asked his foster parents if this were so, they denied it. His inability to

<sup>4</sup> Healy, William, *Mental Conflicts and Misconduct*, p. 214.



make certain just what his relationship really was, resulted in mental conflicts and several varieties of anti-social conduct, particularly running away and stealing.

The consequences usually associated with orphanhood and abandonment of children are physical neglect and abuse. There is no question that these frequently occur. On the other hand, the new surroundings of children without parental care are often superior to the old and the new guardians are sometimes more competent and even become more attached to the children than the natural parents. Many children who have been deprived of parental care find for themselves a place in society and become good home makers, neighbors, workers and citizens.

**Readjustment in Foster Homes.**—Whenever a child is removed from his natural parents and goes to live with strangers there is likely to be some sort of dismay at finding himself detached from familiar persons and surroundings. He does not know what is expected of him or what he can expect from his new associates. Many of his former ways of doing things are regarded as wrong. Even when the foster home has been selected with very great care, there is an inevitable period of unadjustment. Sometimes this is successfully passed through, but sometimes it persists and is aggravated in various ways. The latter (maladjustment) was clearly the case with Carlotta. Below is an instance of the former (accommodation).

Olive, now twenty-five, was in six homes before she was settled. Her paternity is uncertain; her mother was considered feeble-minded, was epileptic, promiscuously immoral, an inmate of the almshouse, cruel and indifferent to her children and slovenly in her home. Throughout the fraternity of Olive there is feeble-mindedness and epilepsy. Olive herself was backward and stupid in school as a young girl, boisterous, stubborn and hard to control. From four of her six foster homes she was returned because she was unsatisfactory. The sixth home, in which she remained from the time that she was twelve until her marriage at the age of twenty-one, was a farm home. The foster father of the family had died and the household consisted of an elderly woman, her son who ran the farm, and her daughter, who taught school. Curiously though, it was apparently the necessity for taking responsibility that stabilized this difficult and quick-tem-

pered girl. At fifteen she took over the entire responsibility of running the house and caring for her foster mother, by this time an invalid. Under the teaching of her foster sister, in whose grade she was, her former dislike for study changed to a real interest in making progress. From that time on she had good reports, was able to skip grades and graduated from the eighth grade at sixteen, having been in school only six years. . . .<sup>5</sup>

If the child is placed with a view to adoption, the problem is not only one of accommodation—working out a *modus vivendi* in the new situation—but also of assimilation. It is important not only that the child “get along” in the new home, but that he acquire the traditions and ideals of the family. Otherwise he will never be a real member of the foster family; he will always be something of an outsider even though legally adopted. This process of assimilation, in contrast to that of accommodation, can take place only slowly; it cannot be forced; it is absolutely dependent upon a desire for unification on the part of both the adopted child and his new relatives. It involves a complete transfer of affection; it means the development of new attitudes and new values.<sup>6</sup>

The stories of Carlotta and Olive make it very plain that the task of the child-placing society is by no means simple. If it is to bring about successful adjustments, it must see that there is a thorough social diagnosis (which is the technical name for deciding what is wrong and what can be done about it) both of child and of foster home. Then the agency must keep in close touch with the child and his foster parents after placement, not only to see what is happening, but to help them over the many difficulties that are sure to arise. In order to be able to correct mistakes in the selection of homes, most societies do not permit adoption until the child and his foster parents have been living together for some months. But in order to guard against such maladjustments as that of Carlotta, they are increasingly careful in deciding what child and what parents may reasonably be expected to “make a go of it.”

<sup>5</sup> Theis, Sophie Van Senden, *How Foster Children Turn Out*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>6</sup> Reuter, E. B., in *Jour. Appl. Soc.*, 8: 97-101.



**Readjustment in Institutions.**—Children who are removed from the home of their natural parents and placed in an institution also pass through a period of unadjustment. In some respects this is very similar to the experience of the child in the foster home. But it differs in the very important respect of usually involving life in a large group instead of in a family, and acceptance of a definite routine instead of the more flexible program of a real home.

We have no account of what went through the minds of the Mead children when they were scattered among three different institutions. But there is little doubt that the affection which these children displayed for one another and for their father suffered a serious shock. However, in their case, recovery seems to have been fairly rapid and adjustment to the institutional life was rather successfully achieved by all except Jennie. To her the change from relative freedom to rather strict discipline and control was a sore trial. What the final outcome will be no one can tell.

With many children there is not only the difficulty of fitting into the routine of the institution, but frequently the still greater difficulty of escaping from it when the time comes to go out into the world again. If, as is so often the case, they have been subjected to mass treatment instead of to individualization, they receive little preparation for the experiences of planning and carrying out their own careers in later life. Their initiative and self-reliance may be deadened. The development of personality is also handicapped by lack of the individual attention which children usually receive in their own home. On the other hand, a number of institutions have a remarkable record for the personal development of children committed to their care.<sup>7</sup> Some of the dangers and the possibilities of institutional care of children are indicated in the following descriptions of two types of "orphanages."

<sup>7</sup> For intimate accounts of personality changes in institutional children see Drucker, Saul, and Hexter, Maurice, *Children Astray*. For the description of an institution in which much personal attention is given to each child and family life is approximated, see Reeder, R. R., *How Two Hundred Children Live and Learn*.

**Institutional Care at its Worst.**—The situation which we are about to describe does not exist completely in any single institution, but represents substantially what is to be found in a considerable number of orphanages with which we are personally familiar. In these institutions there seems to be no definite admission policy. All sorts of children are accepted, frequently without so much as a medical examination and almost always without a visit to those who know the children. Some of the superintendents even go out and seek children to fill up their dormitories in order that they may more readily appeal to the public for funds. Records are either wholly absent or so limited as to be well-nigh useless. Partly as cause and partly as a result of this, there is very limited knowledge of the characteristics and needs of the various children. There is no individual plan, no aid is given to others who may be dealing with the children's family and there are no data for later use. Dismissals are handled even more carelessly than admissions. Children are allowed to return to parents or relatives or are sent to foster homes which have never been visited. No effort is made to determine whether the conditions which brought the children to the institution have been corrected or not. There is no follow-up work to determine what ultimately becomes of the children. Sometimes parents bring their children to the institution, take them out, bring them back and repeat this procedure numerous times.

The institutional care itself is mediocre or worse. There is no regular medical examination; physicians are called spasmodically; the dietary depends on the donations of benevolent individuals rather than on children's needs; education is sometimes provided in the public schools and sometimes in badly equipped, poorly manned institution schools. Children are required to do a large amount of work about the buildings, and tasks are not changed frequently. Hence housekeeping is drudgery rather than educational in character. There is little direction or supervision of recreation. Discipline is erratic. Clothing no longer consists of uniforms, but is almost as bad. A



miscellaneous lot of second-hand garments is classified according to age and sex, no child having his own individual clothes or other personal possessions. Sleeping quarters are usually crowded and unsupervised. The daily routine begins exceedingly early in the morning and permits few rational deviations.

The staff consists of untrained and poorly paid, though usually well-meaning people. Occasionally one is found who has had a high school education, but it is most rare to find even a superintendent who has made any definite study of child psychology, sociology, dietetics, hygiene, or indeed any of the sciences which are fundamental to successful handling of groups of children. The board members either take their responsibilities very lightly and remain in dense ignorance of what goes on in the institution, or run to the other extreme of "fussing" about the buildings and meddling with details of management until they become a veritable nuisance.

The physical equipment of such orphanages ranges from small dilapidated private homes up to monumental piles of brick and mortar. The smaller institutions are almost always badly arranged fire traps with little to inspire pride or self-respect. Furnishings are ordinarily scant except in the board room or parlor. Playground space is limited and apparatus wanting. Garden, poultry, dairy and pets are not to be found. The quarters occupied by members of the staff are unattractive and the equipment with which they have to work in kitchen, laundry and office is far from modern. There is no hospital equipment nor even facilities for isolating children with communicable diseases. Institutions of the type described can be found in nearly every state of the union, although happily they are disappearing wherever state supervision has been well developed and is in the hands of competent people. Curiously, perhaps, a very large proportion of these miserable substitutes for homes are maintained by religious denominations.

**Institutional Care at its Best.**—In contrast to the orphanages described in the preceding paragraphs, we are happy to be able to picture a small number of exceedingly

well-managed children's institutions. Each of these is an integral part of some general child-caring system. In one instance the superintendent is a member of a special committee, consisting of representatives of various types of child-caring agencies, which studies every application coming from a certain group of communities. Only a small fraction of the children for whom care is asked ever find their way into this institution. Some are sent to other institutions, some are placed in foster homes and some are enabled to remain with their own parents. Only children of a relatively homogeneous character are admitted—in this case, children of the same religious and racial group who are mentally and physically sound and between the ages of three and eleven. While the children are there, every effort is made by workers from an affiliated agency to rehabilitate the natural family, if that be possible, and before children leave there is definite knowledge of the situation to which they are going and reasonable assurance that it is suitable for the children.

Care given in this institution is almost everything which that in the other group described is not. There are frequent and regular medical examinations and treatment. Meals are varied, attractive and wholesome, being planned by a trained dietitian. All children attend the public schools, ranging from kindergarten to the university, and mingle freely with boys and girls who live with their parents. There are some instructors on the staff of the institution who give special training designed chiefly to try the children out and determine what special aptitudes they possess. Recreation is provided on a large athletic field, equipped for tennis, basketball and baseball for the older boys and girls, and with swings, slides, etc., for the little tots. There is a gymnasium; there are toys, music and dancing. Discipline is such that the children are at once respectful and unrepressed. Every child has his own individual clothing and other personal possessions with definite places of his own to keep them.

The staff is very carefully selected and well paid. The living accommodations are attractive, and regularly planned



absences two or three times a week enable the workers to take an active part in the affairs of the larger community.

The plant is neither an antiquated, once remodeled residence, nor a tremendous structure designed as a monument to some alleged benefactor. It is a group of cottages and other buildings pleasantly situated on a hillside in a grove. No two buildings are alike architecturally or as to furnishing, yet all are in tasteful harmony. Each cottage is planned to accommodate ten boys and ten girls of various ages. Three or four children share a room, which is modestly, yet tastefully furnished with beds, chairs, dressers, clothespress, etc. The whole establishment presents an appearance so utterly unlike that of the conventional orphanage that one might easily pass it by. Instead of having a large sign over the gate bearing some such title as Orphanage or Children's Home, there is the type of entrance one might find to a street occupied by exclusive householders, and each house has its street number. All this has been very carefully planned in order that the life of the children may be as nearly as possible like that which they will lead after leaving the institution.

### **The Preservation and Restoration of "Natural" Homes.**

—The unadjustments which seem always to accompany the transfer of a child from one social environment to another raise in our minds the question: Might it not be easier and cheaper in many cases to preserve whatever there is of a natural home than to provide either institutional or foster-home care? The answer to this question will depend on the number of partly broken families which, through financial assistance or personal service or both, can be kept from further disintegration and perhaps thoroughly reorganized. That there are some such we have seen in the preceding chapters.

In any given case this calls for a very thorough study of the whole family—not merely the child for whom application is made—to see what are the resources of health, finance and personality. Special attention will be paid to the attitudes toward one another displayed by the members

of the family, their sense of mutual dependence, their common memories and ambitions, their hopes and fears.

If, according to the best judgment of the professional folk consulted, it is wise to remove the child for a time at least, there is the task not merely of finding a suitable foster home or institution, but of seeking to bring about a restoration of the natural family life. This means, on the one hand, guidance of the child in order that he may be prepared for a return to his own home. On the other hand, it means the removal of troublesome elements in the home itself. This latter task is frequently the more difficult of the two. It may involve improvement of health, education in housekeeping and child-care, change of such attitudes and habits as nagging, slovenliness, indifference toward schooling, quarreling with neighbors, etc.

All this implies that home care by his own relatives may contribute a great deal toward the development of wholesome personality in a child. But this does not always occur automatically. Sometimes the home is completely broken by death or disease. Sometimes the personalities of others in the home may be such that the child is repressed or irritated. If these characteristics can be readily changed, no removal may be necessary; if they require more strenuous action, there may have to be a temporary separation. If the family is hopelessly broken or its members thoroughly demoralized, then permanent placement of the child is apparently the only feasible program.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Without revealing their names to anyone else, list the children you know who do not have the care of their natural parents. Put down, so far as you can without prying into their affairs, the provision that has been made for them and how well they seem to be getting along. Write the life history of one such child.
2. Get some adult who was once a child without parental care to tell the story of his life. Write this story in such manner as to indicate the ways in which his personality was affected by the loss of parental home and subsequent experiences.
3. Use your imagination. Suppose you were a child of eight



whose parents had died; describe the sort of institution or foster home in which you would like to live.

4. Suppose you were married, but because of some physical condition which did not otherwise incapacitate you, you were unable to have children of your own. Would you want to adopt a child? If so, describe the sort of child you would want to take. What reasons would probably influence you in this connection?
5. Visit a children's institution and report on:
  - a. Physical equipment—draw plans of buildings and grounds, describe plant and equipment
  - b. Organization—draw organization chart showing interrelations of governing board, committees, executive and staff
  - c. Administration—finances; relations to other agencies
  - d. Staff—number, training, duties, salaries
  - e. Admission—policies and actual routine
  - f. Dismissal—policies and actual routine
  - g. Clothing and personal possessions
  - h. Dietary and manner of serving food
  - i. Play—hours, equipment, direction
  - j. Daily and weekly schedules for children and staff
  - k. Work—nature and rotation of tasks, hours and direction
  - l. Education—institutional or public, teachers, books, rating, etc.
  - m. Medical and dental service
6. Make a similar study of a day nursery.
7. Study a child-placing agency as to:
  - a. Physical equipment
  - b. Organization and administration
  - c. Financing
  - d. Staff
  - e. Investigation of children for whom care is asked
  - f. Investigation of families wanting to take children
  - g. Placement and supervision
  - h. Adoptions
  - i. Relations to other agencies
8. Examine reports of various types of child-caring agencies in different parts of the country, for example: Boston Children's Aid Association, New Jersey State Board of Children's Guardians, Minnesota Children's Bureau of the State Board of Control, New York State Charities Aid Association, Cleveland Children's Bureau.
9. Prepare abstracts of the laws of your home state which deal with child-placing, guardianship, adoption and supervision of agencies by a state department.
10. Examine reports of state departments which supervise child-caring agencies. If possible, interview a representative of

a state board. What methods have been devised to study the results of child-caring work in terms of personality?

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## CHAPTER VI

### NEGLECTED AND ABUSED CHILDREN

In the preceding chapter we discussed the lot of children who are wholly deprived of the care of one or both parents. In this chapter our attention will be centered on children who are not physically separated from their parents, but who fail to receive the sort of care that is essential to their personal development.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes these children are simply neglected, and receive little attention; sometimes they are the victims of a disorganized family life; sometimes they are positively abused and mistreated. In the story of the Fields we have an example of the second type of neglected childhood.

#### THE FIELDS—A TRAMP FAMILY<sup>2</sup>

One Saturday morning in the fall of 1922 a boy and a girl, aged 13 and 10 respectively, came to the Court House of a small western town to sell lace. George was carrying a small satchel full of lace which he said his mother had made. Carrie had several coat-hangers which she was selling. The Probation Officer, Miss Andrews, questioned the children and they told the following story.

They had come with their mother, Mrs. Field, from their home in Waterville on Thursday. There were eleven chil-

<sup>1</sup> This chapter affords an excellent example of the aphorism credited to Royal Meeker that American statistics approach very nearly to "zero with the rim knocked off." In this instance, however, the conditions described are so difficult to define in general terms that enumeration is out of the question, at least for the present.

<sup>2</sup> This is the summary of a case record from the files of a juvenile probation office in a small western town. As elsewhere in the book, all names and other obviously identifying data have been changed or eliminated.



dren altogether, ranging in age from 2 to 16, and they lived in a four-room house which they owned. Their father worked on a street-car and their mother made lace. When she had a "batch" of it finished, they would all go out to sell it. The teachers in Waterville always gave permission to leave school for this purpose, provided the children were back by the following Monday. George said that he had sold \$10 worth of lace on Friday and \$3 worth in the Court House that very morning. His mother was selling lace on one of the nearby streets; the children were to meet her on the corner after a while. When asked where they were staying while in town, they could not tell exactly, but said it was in a "big brown rooming-house." They were planning to return to Waterville on Sunday.

Observe from later developments how much of this first story is true.

The Probation Officer telephoned to the city hall and found that Mrs. Field did not have a permit to peddle lace. The clerk advised that she be brought to his office. Miss Andrews then went with George downstairs to the office in which he claimed to have sold \$3 worth of lace; the people there denied ever having bought anything from him. It then occurred to Miss Andrews that the lace looked like a factory product. She took it to a dry goods store where she was told that very likely it was not hand-made at all.

Meeting Mrs. Field on the street, she took her to the Probation Office for an interview. Mrs. Field was a short, untidy looking woman. She had a green velvet corduroy coat, a striped, pleated skirt and a sport hat. She also had a bag of lace and informed Miss Andrews that she had made it herself. She admitted, however, that the family did not live in Waterville; they were on their way there from Colorado. The rest of the family was in a covered wagon some distance out of town. Mr. Field was said to be in poor health—which was undoubtedly true. Mrs. Field professed great regret that George had not told the truth, saying that she wanted her children always to tell the truth, that she was a good Christian woman, etc.

The Probation Officer then took Mrs. Field and the two children before the Judge of the Juvenile Court, to whom the woman repeated her story. However, she later admitted that she did not make the lace, but bought it from a firm in Cincinnati. A woman had told her that she would make better sales if she told people that the lace was handmade.

Later the same morning Miss Andrews went with Mrs. Field and the children to the covered wagon, which was a mile and a half out of town. "Children came from every place," dirty, ragged children. The covered wagon was filthy. There was a heap of ragged bed clothes underneath and a bed at one end of the wagon. The thirteen people slept on these two so-called beds. Harry, the boy they said was 16, was much undersized, as were all the children. They all had dark circles around their eyes and were listless looking. Three of the children were fairly well dressed, but the others had shoes and stockings so ragged that it was hard to see how they could stay on. Mrs. Field now told of a sister in Waterville to whom they were going.

It was a quarter before twelve when Miss Andrews went back to town. She telephoned to a member of the Juvenile Court Committee to go with her to see the family again at one o'clock. But when they reached the place where the outfit had been, the Fields were gone. Half a mile down the road they could be seen driving off in such haste as they were able to make. Two wagons were drawn by two horses each. Two other horses were being ridden by two of the boys. A seventh horse was tied to the rear of the second wagon. A crate of chickens was fastened to the side of one wagon. It seemed best to let them go. (Was it? and if not, what could the social worker have done?)

The Probation Officer then wrote to the Family Welfare Society in Waterville telling of her experience with the Fields and of their alleged relatives in Waterville. In reply she received the following letter.

"While we have no record of this family in our files, yet the family is known to us. Periodically they pass through Waterville, the woman doing polite begging under the guise of selling lace. She always avoids our office, and



we have had numerous complaints from various parts of the city, but she did not need our aid, was conducting her own business which was none of ours. We interviewed the sister at the address given. (The house consists of a tin shack in a back yard.) She stated that Mr. Field and his family left for Lewiston after staying with her one week. From her statement it is plain to see that the Field family is a professional tramp family, the woman and children making the living by selling lace, drumming their customers on the plea that her husband is sick and there is a large family to support. The children are not receiving the educational advantages to which they are entitled, but when they are near some town for any length of time they are placed in school. However, the family is constantly on the move. The sister says that they make lots of money and are always independent."

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What originally started the Field family "on the road" we do not know. They have never stayed in one place long enough for anyone to find out. For the same reason it is impossible to determine with any exactness what were the effects of this nomadic life on the personalities of the children. But this much at least is plain. They were being deprived of schooling; they were taught to lie in order to make sales and to evade the officers of the law. As a matter of fact, their salesmanship was not far removed from begging. Mrs. Field was cultivating in her children the attitudes of social outlaws, cut off from all "normal" associations with other children, regarding settled folk as their natural prey, and playing hide-and-seek with the officers. This isolation and this conflict with organized society promise a good deal of trouble for the future. Instead of learning how to get along with other people, these children are growing up to be social misfits.

THE DOWNING CHILDREN <sup>3</sup>

One morning in March, 1912, Mrs. Hart, an aunt of Mrs. Downing, called at the office of the Associated Charities in a southern city to ask that a visitor be sent to the Downing home immediately. The story Mrs. Hart told was that the Downings had moved in from a small country town about four months previously and Mr. Downing had died soon after from heart trouble. Mrs. Downing had squandered most of the money that was left, was a confirmed alcoholic and shockingly neglected her children. A social case worker called upon Mrs. Downing and later through contacts with relatives and others, secured the following information.

*Mrs. Downing.*—Mrs. Downing's father was a rather prosperous farmer who saw that she took advantage of the school facilities in their neighborhood. Later she took a teacher's examination, and taught for one year. At the age of seventeen she married Mr. Downing and they had four children. Her husband was a successful farmer who provided well for his wife and children. After his death Mrs. Downing received about \$4,000 which she invested rather unwisely, first in a grocery store and later in two boarding houses. She lost practically everything she had and then returned to her father, where she and the children worked in the fields. Finding this very strenuous she returned to the city and secured a job in a skirt factory. Later she was employed by a can company and earned about \$8.00 a week. She allowed the children to run the streets without supervision so that they were always dirty and exposed to every sort of evil influence. Mrs. Downing herself associated freely with women of bad character and was several times arrested for drunkenness and disorderly conduct. When brought into court on one occasion, she was so intoxicated, surly and insolent, that the judge could

<sup>3</sup> This is the summary of Red Cross Teaching Record No. 8. The original and several other records may be secured in mimeographed form from National Headquarters, American Red Cross, Washington, D. C.



do nothing with her. Conflicting stories were told concerning the length of time that Mrs. Downing had been drinking. She herself insisted that it was only since her husband's death and because of her intense loneliness. Neighbors and relatives, however, said that long before Mr. Downing died and indeed soon after their marriage, she was known to be given to "drinking, doping and immorality." At times she would take from \$15.00 to \$100.00 and go to the city for a week or two. On returning to her home town she would be in such a violent condition that it sometimes took five men to lift her from the train. Provision was made at one time for Mrs. Downing to go to a hospital and receive treatment for a number of minor ailments in addition to her alcoholism. She actually availed herself of this opportunity, but it seems to have done no permanent good and after a time she disappeared from sight.

*Mr. Downing*, as already indicated, was never known to the social workers personally, but all reports about him were to the effect that he was a successful farmer and a good father. He evidently realized the mistake he had made in marrying Mrs. Downing, but was always loyal to her in spite of her wild conduct. Beyond this, very little is known about him.

*Gladys*, the oldest child, was born in 1898 and died in 1912 of syphilis. It seems that her mother had brought her up in a life of immorality and forced her to submit to the will of any man who might come. But Mrs. Downing herself would never admit the fact, nor even drop a hint of the tragedy of Gladys' life.

*Paul*, born in 1900, was a shy and undeveloped child. At the age of ten he was unable to read a simple sentence and showed little interest in school or trade. He went to work in a factory soon after, where he earned \$3.50 a week, but discouraged at his low wages and hoping to find something more congenial, he soon left this job. His recreation consisted in going to the movies two or three times a week. While still enrolled in school he was reported frequently as a truant, but from his later development and

from what we know of his mother, it is not difficult to guess what was behind his somewhat irregular behavior. Paul showed on numerous occasions an intense devotion to his mother and to his brothers and sister. He also displayed a sense of responsibility for the younger boys. Shortly before Gladys' death it was reported that Paul, who was then twelve years old, came into her room and found a man with her. He ordered the man to leave, saying that he would kill him. When the family was later broken up by joint action of the Associated Charities and Juvenile Court Paul went to live with an uncle.

*Stanley*, born in 1903, was a bright and usually well-behaved child. But he was so irregular in school attendance that he was dropped from the roll. At the age of nine he was employed as soda boy in a candy store, but was discharged for not coming to work on time. Like his older brother, Stanley displayed a remarkable loyalty to his mother, sometimes telling rather ingenious lies in order to protect her. When the family was broken up, Stanley was sent to an aunt.

*George*, born in 1909, was for a time in danger of losing his eyesight as a result of improper care while he was ill with the measles. Later he was irregular in his attendance at kindergarten and always looked thin and undernourished. One day his teacher called at the home and found him in a very unkempt state. He told her he had slept in his clothes and had only a little rice and jelly for dinner. When the home was broken up, George was sent with Stanley to the home of his aunt where he seemed to be very happy.

*Social Treatment.*—When the Downing family was first reported to the Associated Charities, a case worker called upon them and wrote a number of letters to relatives with a view to arranging for the family to leave the city. But before anything definite was accomplished, Mrs. Downing was arrested for drunkenness and disorderly conduct, kept in jail a few days and then allowed to go. She took her children and went to the home of her father. Nothing further was heard from her by the social workers for four years. The next word about the family came in January,



1916, when the police department reported that she had again been arrested, and asked the Associated Charities to look after the family. Again before anything was accomplished someone paid Mrs. Downing's fine, she was released and returned to her father's home in the country. Nothing more was heard of her until May, 1917, when the Probation Officer of the Juvenile Court reported that Mrs. Downing was working at the can factory and leaving her children uncared for. There was also a truancy report from one of the schools. It was not until after this that most of the information about the family was assembled and any effort made to devise and carry through an adequate plan for meeting this situation. One obstacle to effective case work was the attitude of the judge of the Juvenile Court who, even in the face of the facts, was not convinced that the home should be broken up. He did eventually, however, agree to the following plan: that Mrs. Downing should go to the hospital for medical treatment, that Stanley and George should be committed to the custody of their aunt and Paul to that of his uncle. As soon as the children were thus placed with relatives, Mrs. Downing disappeared and both the Associated Charities and the Juvenile Court washed their hands of the affair.

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Again we are without information as to the origins of instability. We do not know whether Mrs. Downing was mentally subnormal, or whether she was suffering from some physical or mental disease. We do not know how she first came to indulge in excessive drinking and sexual promiscuity. We do know that by the time the Associated Charities and Juvenile Court undertook to make a real analysis of the situation, Mrs. Downing was utterly demoralized and the family was showing signs of disintegration. Our only marvel is that Paul and Stanley were so loyal to their mother and that family unity had not entirely disappeared. What the after-effects of separating the children have been we do not know; for, as the case record does not tell us the real beginning of this story, neither

does it tell us the end. There is some reason to believe that the children fitted happily into the homes of their relatives. But what were the deep-seated consequences of their trying experiences we can only guess.

**Other Neglected and Abused Children.**—In an interesting bulletin of the United States Bureau of Education,<sup>4</sup> Mrs. Woolley and Miss Ferris present the cases of several neglected or abused children whose unadjustments manifested themselves in failure at school. These are of considerable interest to us, because, while the problem on the surface (school failure), was in all cases the same, and while the apparent causes (neglect and abuse) were practically the same, each was after all a different situation.

Jean was a nine-year-old girl who was kept out of school by her illiterate parents in order to care for the younger children. The family of eight lived in two rooms in a dirty basement. After a time the father ran away with another woman. It was little wonder that Jean made a bad failure of the first grade work; but it was truly surprising that she kept her balance and assumed considerable responsibility for affairs at home. She showed a personal adaptability which enabled her to meet each new crisis as it arose; thus she was saved from serious maladjustment and demoralization in spite of her neglect. The task here was to prevent the neglect from handicapping her for later life.

In the case of William, the doctor had been vainly trying for three years to persuade his parents to have his tonsils and adenoids removed. William's home consisted of two wretchedly dirty and poorly furnished rooms on the third floor over a saloon. The entire family of six slept in one room with the windows closed. The father was a cruel man who frequently beat the children when he was drunk. William himself was constantly hungry and always dirty. When he was sent to a special open-air class his mother was indignant because "they put him into a tub of water every day." Just how William felt about all this we do

<sup>4</sup> Woolley, Helen T., and Ferris, Elizabeth, *Diagnosis and Treatment of Young School Failures*, U. S. Bur. Ed., Bul., 1923, No. 1, pp. 19-62.



not know, but this little brother in kindergarten was heard to remark that he wished his father would die. Lack of proper food combined with loss of affection and security to make William quite unresponsive. "It took almost four months to get the child roused to do anything like work." His personal unadjustment was more serious than Jean's, but he too had resources of patience and industry which made possible the averting of complete demoralization.

Henry, aged seven, had fearfully enlarged tonsils which his parents refused to have removed. His teeth, too, were bad and other conditions needed attention. Henry's home was in a rear tenement where there was little sunlight and the air was foul from old buildings, garbage cans and the dirt of the alley. He was the youngest of four children and was much petted and indulged. His mother was a flighty woman with little education, and an inveterate movie fan. She took Henry to the movies every night. The symbols of this boy's unadjustment were his inability to concentrate and his habit of gazing into space. Perhaps we should say that he was actually maladjusted.

Landon's father was dead, and his mother, having "just quit" school when in the third grade, was not at all troubled at the school failure of her nine-year-old boy. When he was placed in an observation class in order to discover what was wrong and how to overcome it, she displayed not merely ignorance but resentment. The injury to Landon's personality is suggested by the fact that, although he did fairly well in the psychological tests (I. Q. 81), he still "talked baby talk" and was unable to construct sentences, because of his very limited field of experience. Furthermore, he was "shy and sensitive and had worried in secret over his failures until the expectation of failure dominated his soul." His maladjustment has proved much more difficult to overcome than was the case with any of the children previously described.

Six-year-old Curtis lived with his parents and three brothers in a tenement facing a filthy alley. His father was a heavy drinker, a weak, good-for-nothing man, who did not work for the support of his family except when he was

arrested and sent to the workhouse. Curtis' mother was a futile little woman quite incapable of grappling with so difficult a family problem. So irresponsible was she that on one occasion when Curtis was very ill with the "flu," she spent the entire morning at school, enjoying a visit with his teacher, while Curtis was alone in the house. After securing a divorce she proceeded to entertain another man to the great distress of Curtis and his brothers. This series of events was decidedly too much for the small boy. He lived in a constant state of anxiety; he lost his respect and affection for both parents. When he reached the third grade he began to be unruly, to play truant and tell lies. Here is a case of maladjustment leading directly into demoralization.

Giovanni's father was the "black sheep" of a good Italian family. His brutality and neglect gradually demoralized the mother, who had real affection for him, and she began to drink. Eventually the father deserted the family and the mother went out to work. Between the ages of two and six Giovanni spent much of his time locked in the room with his uncle who was a blind and supposedly harmless lunatic. As a result of such experiences as these the boy developed a chronic state of fear—fear of his mother, fear of being placed in an institution, fear of who knows what all. He also manifested distress at the loss of social status, and, as compensation, told splendid tales of his father's accumulating fortune and service in the Italian army.

Ethel's mother was a young woman of charming appearance, but with a history of questionable and irregular behavior. Ethel's older sister had already been "in trouble," and Ethel herself was precocious in matters of sex. The authors' concluding comment was this. "She is the stuff that the traditional chorus girl is made of. . . . There is no reason to expect conventional morality from Ethel."

Here then are some of the factors involved in child neglect—vagrancy, begging, ignorance, alcoholism, cruelty, filth, overcrowding, sickness, overindulgence, mental ab-



normality, sex vice, poverty and school failure. Which is cause and which effect? Usually this is hard to determine. It is easier and probably wiser to regard all these as elements in a complex problem-situation which is to be approached now from this angle and now from that, but which will not be resolved until every phase of the difficulty has been dealt with. The common factors in these several cases were not merely the obvious school failure and parental neglect, but a serious disturbance of the child's personality. In every instance there was a loss of security and a consequent feeling of uncertainty and anxiety. In at least one case there was loss of social status and an unsatisfied longing for personal recognition. In several of these families the parents destroyed their children's affection and left them with the sense of having no one who really cared for them.

**Case Work With Neglected Children.**—Neither of the case summaries presented at the beginning of this chapter affords a good illustration of effective social case work. In neither case was action taken early enough, nor was there subsequent follow-up work, to see that any plan which might have been devised was actually carried out. Case work with neglected children like any other case work, involves a careful study of the persons involved, in this instance, specifically, study of the neglected children from the standpoint of health, schooling, recreation, home surroundings and moral influences. It involves a study of the family, with an effort to determine the reasons for the neglect and why the parents are failing to meet their responsibilities. It is also important to discover available resources, both within the family and without, for correction of the troublesome conditions. This may mean finding some basis of appealing to the parents, perhaps some undeveloped pride which may be stimulated, perhaps fear that the children will be permanently removed. It may mean finding relatives, as in the case of the Downings, who are able and willing to give the neglected children a home, perhaps temporarily, perhaps permanently. It may mean securing a suitable foster home, or possibly an institution

which will care for the children and protect them against their delinquent parents. Work with neglected children differs from some other forms of case work in that it is frequently necessary to assemble evidence in such form that it can be presented to a court. But whether the evidence must be submitted in court or not, it is obviously important to be sure that one has the essential facts before taking the responsibility for the physical separation of the members of a family.

Sometimes the causes of neglect can be removed while the children remain in their natural home, but more frequently it seems to be necessary to take the children away, at least for a time, while every effort is made to change the attitudes of the parents so that the home may be reunited. Even if it proves impossible or unwise ever to restore the children to their parents, a good social case worker is not content with mere protection of the children, important though that be. He is also concerned with the treatment of the father and mother; that is to say, development or restoration of wholesome parental attitudes if possible, adjustment to some other mode of living, or perhaps custodial care if the neglect has arisen from some chronic physical or mental condition.

But returning to the child, who is our chief interest—when he is removed from the parental home he may be taken to a detention home under the jurisdiction of the juvenile court, he may be placed in a temporary boarding home or he may be taken at once to some children's institution; but in any case before a long-time plan is agreed upon, there is a temporary period of investigation and of treatment, in order to get the essential facts and to meet the child's immediate needs. With reference to the question of whether the child who must be removed from his parents at least for some considerable time, should be sent to a foster home or to an institution, there are several points to be considered. If the parents discover where he is, they may be very annoying to a foster mother; while they would find it more difficult to interfere with the staff of an institution. Some children, whether because of their neglect



or for other reasons, will have physical conditions, mental abnormalities or habits which render them unacceptable to most private homes. In such cases institutional care is probably wiser, although of course much depends on the type of institution and the character of its staff.

The significant thing, from our standpoint, is neither the exercise of the police power nor the provision for these needy children out of charitable funds. It is the effort to develop personality through the influence of other people and through the modification of external surroundings. If the personalities of the parents can be sufficiently changed in certain directions, the child's further development is greatly facilitated. If the parents do not respond to social treatment, other adjustments are necessary. The child's personal growth must then be promoted through the establishment of new relationships. He must become a member of a new family circle or perhaps of an institutional group.

**The Juvenile Court as a Protective Agency.**—One of the agencies through which social case work may be practiced for the benefit of neglected children is the juvenile court. To many people the term suggests a sort of criminal court for children. It seems not to be generally understood that under the laws of nearly every state the juvenile court is primarily a protective agency. The law usually extends the jurisdiction of the court to dependent and neglected children, which terms are defined as including children who are: (1) destitute, (2) homeless, (3) abandoned, (4) dependent upon the public for support, (5) without proper parental care or guardianship, (6) begging or receiving alms, (7) found living in a house of ill fame or with a vicious or disreputable person, (8) in a home unfit because of neglect, cruelty or depravity on the part of the parents, (9) peddling or playing a musical instrument or singing in a public place, (10) in surroundings dangerous to morals, health or general welfare or such as to warrant the state in assuming guardianship. Forty states now have laws making adults criminally liable for contributing to a child's becoming delinquent or dependent. The court which has jurisdiction over juvenile cases is

usually given this jurisdiction also. In a number of states the juvenile court has jurisdiction in case of desertion and non-support; in other states in cases of abandonment or failure to provide for the child. In still others it has jurisdiction over persons accused of any offense against a child. In several states the juvenile court administers the mother's pension law. Elsewhere it has jurisdiction over adults who violate the child labor law or fail to comply with the compulsory school attendance law.

Usually the procedure in the juvenile court is simple and informal. In most states a petition may be filed by any reputable person who believes it to be in the interest of a given child that action be taken by the court. Usually a summons is issued for the parents or other persons involved and there is no arrest unless they fail to heed the summons. Pending a court hearing, the child may be kept in a detention home, a temporary boarding home, or in some cases may remain with his own parents. Detention in a police station or a jail is generally forbidden, although frequently practiced. The hearings are usually held without much regard to technicalities of procedure or rules of evidence. They are often held in the judge's chambers and only those who have a legitimate interest in the case are allowed to be present. The disposition of cases of neglected children may involve leaving them in their own home subject to the visitation of a friendly probation officer, appointment of a legal guardian, commitment to a public or private institution or child-placing society.

In some of the juvenile courts, provision is made for physical and mental examinations and all that enters into effective social case work. However, such provisions are far from general. As a result, the most that is usually accomplished is the removal of a neglected child from obviously destructive surroundings and placement where he may be expected to receive better physical care. The question of the relative merits—in terms of the child's personality—of placing the parents on probation, of temporary removal of the child, of institutional as opposed to foster-home care, and of placement in one type of home rather



than another is not often gone into. A court order of removal, a scolding for the parents, some pious advice for the child, and the affair is over—officially.

**Children's Protective Societies.**—Aside from the juvenile court there are other public agencies which in various communities and states are helping to care for neglected children. These include boards of children's guardians and county and municipal departments of public welfare. But older than any of the public agencies are some of the private societies. Ever since they were first founded, family welfare societies, children's aid societies and legal aid societies have incidentally dealt with situations which involved the neglect and abuse of children. It remained for the humane societies to feature this protective work in a prominent way. About sixty years ago there were numerous humane societies in the United States which included among their functions one or more of the following: the protection of prisoners, of the aged and of animals. The animal work usually bulked largest in their program because it was simple and revenue-producing. Until the founding of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children in 1874, work with children entered very little into the programs of the humane societies, but from this time on they began to emphasize it. However, they went little beyond the protection of children from gross physical cruelty. The staffs of most of these humane societies were quite unfitted to carry on social case work; hence they have rarely become more than an adjunct to the police and have frequently done little more than to impede the development of real protective work for children.

The societies for the prevention of cruelty to children, familiarly known as S. P. C. C., have had the advantage of freeing child care from the overshadowing work with animals; but with a few exceptions they too seem to have added very little to the police function. The emphasis has been upon the rescue of children from brutal treatment and degrading surroundings. They have concerned themselves rather little with the causes which led up to the tragedy in a child's life and have assumed relatively little respon-

sibility for a constructive program for his future. However, there are some interesting and happy exceptions to this. Some of the S. P. C. C. are genuine social case-work agencies, studying the influences in child life which tend to produce warped personalities, helping children over personal and family crises and seeking to effect lasting accommodations. In doing this they supplement and anticipate action of the police, juvenile court, or other public agencies. They cooperate with child labor committees, schools, and all of the varied agencies that may be helpful in meeting the needs of neglected children. They investigate complaints, offer temporary care, place children in foster homes and carry cases to court.

Similar to the better type of S. P. C. C. is a group of agencies commonly known by the title, Juvenile Protective Association. These agencies also do legal-social case work, investigating complaints, prosecuting adults and providing care and treatment for neglected children. But a larger part of their work has to do with a different phase of child neglect. Complaints are received not only of individual cases of abuse, but also of conditions that in any way contribute to juvenile dependency or delinquency or have a demoralizing effect in the community. They conduct special investigations of carnivals, amusement parks, moving picture theaters, road houses, dance halls, cabarets, poolrooms, indecent literature, etc. They publish reports of these investigations and seek in various ways to inform the public of the dangers which threaten childhood in their community.

**Prevention of Child Neglect and Abuse.**—It will be evident from our description of the juvenile court and the various private protective agencies that social treatment and prevention go hand in hand. Especially is the work of the juvenile protective associations largely preventive in character. But speaking in more general terms, we may say that a program for the elimination of child neglect and abuse would include the following items. (1) Because many of the parents who fail to give their children proper care and training are mentally defective or mentally sick, any provision for the feeble-minded and the so-called “in-



sane" will help to prevent the neglect of children. (2) Then there is the matter of vigorous enforcement of laws pertaining to school attendance, child labor, non-support, prohibition, control of communicable diseases, housing, etc. While each of these laws involves much more than mere prevention of neglect, its enforcement will contribute definitely to that end. (3) When we see how little constructive use is made of juvenile court laws and how little understanding of their purpose and possibilities is in the minds even of the judges and probation officers, we are impressed with the educational work which must be done, if cases of neglect are to be discovered early and dealt with effectively before passing the incipient stage. (4) Cooperation between schools, juvenile courts and every sort of public and private social-work organization will mean the early discovery and prompt treatment of situations which might easily become serious menaces to the development of young children. (5) The wise regulation of child-caring agencies by an adequately financed and professionally staffed state department will keep many children from falling into the hands of those who are either incompetent or ill disposed to provide suitable care and training.

But more fundamental than any changes in social machinery is the modification of popular attitudes. Doubtless one of the reasons that children are neglected and abused is the hoary tradition of parents' rights in their offspring. Not a few judges seem to be deterred by this notion from intervening to prevent lasting damage to a child's personality. Another social attitude which seems to call for attention is that of regarding almost any kind of person or agency that professes to be "saving children" as "doing good." If there were instead a critical attitude of demanding to see results in the lives of boys and girls, many so-called philanthropies would have to change their ways or close their doors. Finally, there is the popular tendency to regard a social problem as solved when some legal action has been taken. For example, the public may be quite wrought up over the abuse of a child by ignorant or dissolute parents, but it is entirely satisfied to drop the

matter as soon as the court deprives these adults of the custody of their child. It forgets, if it ever realized, that much yet remains to be done before that boy or girl shall have developed into a wholesome citizen.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Secure from some social agency the stories of children who have been neglected or abused. Write summaries of these in terms of the children's personalities.
2. Visit a children's protective society and report on:
  - a. Organization—secure constitution, and draw an organization chart
  - b. Personnel—board, staff: training, duties, salaries
  - c. Office and record systems
  - d. Case-work methods—application, investigation, making and carrying out plans
  - e. Relations to other agencies, especially confidential exchange, family welfare society, other children's agencies, juvenile and other courts, schools
3. Visit a probation office and detention home and report on:
  - a. Organization
  - b. Personnel
  - c. Plant and equipment
  - d. Office and record systems
  - e. Case-work methods
  - f. Institutional care—safety, supervision, medical attention, food, education and recreation, daily routine, length of stay.
  - g. Relations with other agencies
4. Write abstracts of the laws of your state which pertain to the protection of children against neglect and abuse.
5. Review the reports of various types of protective agencies, e.g. Massachusetts S. P. C. C., Chicago Juvenile Protective Association, Minneapolis Children's Protective Society, Cleveland Humane Society, West Virginia Board of Children's Guardians. Note the relative attention to police and case-work functions.

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## CHAPTER VII

### "DIFFICULT" CHILDREN

In the two chapters immediately preceding we have studied unadjusted children with reference to two groups of factors, loss of parental care and neglect or abuse. We are shifting our angle of vision now to the *conduct* of children who do not get along well with others. This does not mean necessarily the study of new children with hitherto unmet characteristics; it means quite as truly a restatement of the problems presented by children who have been studied from some other point of view. Thus the Downing children were not only neglected, they also were truants from school. The Fielding youngsters, traveling about in a covered wagon, were young beggars. Jennie Mead, a motherless girl, had an overdeveloped spirit of independence and sense of her own importance. The older Newton child, deserted by his father, was self-willed and disobedient. Harry Jenkins, a fatherless lad, was believed to steal; and Edwin, his younger brother, was fretful and disorderly. Kenneth McGregor, presented definitely as a "problem" child, was a liar, petty thief and truant.

#### JOSEPH PASTOR—A TRUANT <sup>1</sup>

In April, 1917, Joseph Pastor, then thirteen years old, was brought to the Judge Baker Foundation for study as a school offender. For three years he had been "playing hookey," but recently his truancy had been excessive. In this respect he was considered about the most difficult boy

<sup>1</sup> This is the summary of case No. 11, in the Judge Baker Foundation Case Studies, Series I. This series of records is available for teaching purposes and consists of twenty pamphlets to be had from the Judge Baker Foundation, 40 Court Street, Boston, Mass.



his school principal had ever dealt with. In this summary we shall follow the investigation of the Judge Baker Foundation rather than the chronological history of Joe himself.

One of the first steps was to secure a picture of Joe's background, especially through a study of his family. It was found that Joe's father, who was born in Italy, had come to America as a young child, married here and spent the rest of his life in the United States. He was a man of good habits, foreman for a mercantile firm and until shortly before his death was always healthy. He had died two years before from some abdominal trouble. Joe's mother was born in the United States of parents who came from Ireland. She was at the time of this investigation a sickly looking woman, but pleasant and evidently fairly intelligent. Not much information was secured about the father's relatives because nearly all of them had remained in Italy. However, they were said to be healthy, normal people of good reputation. Much the same situation obtained with reference to the mother's family. Nothing conclusive is known, but there is no evidence of any unfortunate family history.

Joe himself was the youngest of eight children, two of whom had died. All the others were thoroughly healthy and none except Joe ever gave trouble either in regard to general behavior or school attendance. Joe's growth and development were quite normal with the exception of a fall from a second story window while still a baby. There is, however, no evidence of any permanent injury from this accident.

The home was found to be in a rather poor but not congested district. It consisted of six rooms on two floors of a three-story frame house. They were rather well furnished and very neatly kept. The income was adequate from the earnings of the three children who worked and lived at home. There seemed to be no vicious influences in the immediate neighborhood, but Joe attended a school some distance away, near which there were notorious theaters and many "movies." The family atmosphere was

one of affection, but the mother had never been active in discipline of the children. Joe had been babied and petted a great deal.

The family did not seem to know much about Joe's companions. He brought no boys home with him. The school principal reported that he believed Joe's truancy began with some bad associates, but he had little more definite information about them than did the family. The members of the household usually stayed at home in the evening, playing games, and having music. Joe was never fond of reading at home. He seemed to be "crazy for the movies." He always had a poor appetite in the morning and frequently went to school with little or no breakfast. He drank considerable tea and smoked a little, but seemed to have no other undesirable personal habits.

Joe attended a public school which was not overcrowded, where there was an especially good *esprit de corps* and the principal himself took a keen interest in his "problem" children. This school had an unusually fine record with reference to truancy, averaging not more than five cases a month out of two thousand pupils. Joe did not start to school until he was almost seven because his mother was afraid to have him cross some railroad tracks which were near the house. For two years he did well, but in the third grade he began to be absent occasionally. His mother stated that she had sometimes kept him at home to help when she was ill. There was a little irregularity in the fourth grade, but it was in the fifth that serious trouble began. The principal used every method with which he was familiar to interest Joe in his school work and stop the truancy, but quite without success. Joe failed to be promoted that year, an experience which discouraged him very much. The next fall he was transferred to a parochial school where his conduct was so unsatisfactory and his attendance so poor that his mother begged to have him returned to the public school. Here he was placed with a teacher who had been unusually successful with truants, and in spite of some irregularity he received promotion at the end of the year to the sixth grade. The following



year he was absent from school about half of the time and on a few occasions his classroom conduct was extremely bad. It was at this time that he was referred to the Judge Baker Foundation for study, since no one had been able to get at the root of Joe's misconduct or to find a way of checking it. An interesting and rather unusual feature of Joe's conduct was that aside from his truancy he made very little trouble. He did not stay out at night, was not known to have stolen or to have bad sex habits. He lied more or less, but usually in self-defense after playing truant. Physically, Joe was a mild looking boy with rather delicate, clear-cut profile. He was four inches below the median height for his age and three pounds under the normal for his height. He was eighteen pounds under the median for his age. For the most part he was in good physical condition, although he had some slightly enlarged glands. These suggested the possibility of syphilis, but since the Wassermann test was negative, this was largely ruled out.

In the mental examination, Joe was not unfriendly, but he was plainly uninterested in many of the tests. He seemed to be easily fatigued or bored. However, he was found to have fairly good general ability and no special abilities or disabilities were observed. He did his best work with concrete material. There was no evidence of any mental imbalance. In the study of his personality many really good characteristics came out. At home he was always helpful and honest. He was thoroughly kind-hearted, quite generous and not selfish in any way. He was not lazy, but was changeable in his interests. His mother and sister considered him very nervous. As observed at the clinic, Joe was quiet and not unfriendly, but evasive except in expressing his marked antipathy toward the school situation. He seemed to have a firm confidence in his ability to get on in the world without formal education. It was thought that this may have been an over-compensation for his school failures, which were due in turn to a dislike of school.

In telling his own story, Joe brought out little that was new. His conversation centered about his hatred for school

work. He said, "I don't like to work at the things they have at school. It gives me a headache and a bellyache, makes me dizzy-like. Everything you do at school makes me sick. I feel better on the outside." It appeared, however, that he did not have headaches anywhere except at school. He insisted that he slept well, did not dream, had heard little talk about sex matters and had no interest in them. He said that he had never had but one bad companion and he did not even remember that boy's name or what he told him.

After going over these various phases of Joe's life and make-up, an effort was made to summarize the probable direct causes of his truancy. It was evident that he was extremely dissatisfied with school, but did find satisfaction in street life and "movies." The origin of the dissatisfaction with school was thought possibly to have lain in (a) his physical condition, fatigability, nervous instability, and eating no breakfast, (b) intense dislike of indoor life and sitting still, (c) the possible development of a sense of inferiority in school life through the lack of harmony between his actual achievement and his wish for recognition.

In court Joe was placed on probation and ordered to go to school regularly. The next month he was transferred to a disciplinary school for truants in order that he might have industrial training. Mrs. Pastor tried to help by eliminating tea and urging Joe to eat more breakfast. In the summer he spent about two months in the country. When fall came Joe re-entered the disciplinary school, but did not get on at all well. He was returned to court and given a suspended sentence to a state institution with the understanding that he should go to the country and attend school there. He was placed on a farm and began attending school in a nearby small town. The discipline in this school was much less formal than any Joe had met before. There was a spirit of sociability and yet of orderly work. Joe did rather well both on the farm and at school. The next summer he went back home and secured a job. He was an irregular worker, but got into no particular difficulty.



After a time his mother died and his two sisters married. Joe enlisted in the army, giving a false age, and spent two and a half years with the army of occupation in Germany. He returned home, apparently a healthy young man with no bad habits, settled down to work and fitted happily into the home of one of his married sisters.

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**Other “Difficult” Children.**—Truancy is by no means the only or even the most frequent conduct problem encountered in the schoolroom. In a survey made by the National Association of Visiting Teachers several years ago,<sup>2</sup> the problems met with were classified under four main heads: (1) maladjustment in scholarship, (2) adverse home conditions, (3) behavior problems, (4) leaving school prematurely. The maladjustment in scholarship involved children who were deficient in lessons because of excessive home work, lack of parental control leading to late hours and bad companions, indifference of parents toward the child's school progress, unhygienic living, etc. Sometimes children who were reported for poor lessons, restlessness and bad conduct, were really of superior ability and were bored to death by dull companions and lessons too easy for them. The adverse home conditions of which the school difficulties were only symptoms, involved varying factors such as poor management on the part of the mother, excessive housework or other employment of children, inadequate training in families broken through desertion, divorce or death, and all sorts of irritations due to friction in the home. The behavior problems included petty thieving, making false excuses, mischievousness due to lack of proper employment, quarreling and various “bad” practices on the playground and on the street between home and school. Many children were found to be seeking employment certificates, not because of economic pressure, but because they were discouraged or otherwise felt out of place in the educational system.

<sup>2</sup> *The Visiting Teacher in the United States*, New York: Public Education Association, 1921.

But conduct problems are not confined to the school. They are met in the home, on the street and everywhere that children are found. In a mental hygiene survey of a metropolitan district, the following are among the conditions found in a group of 190 children.<sup>3</sup> In the same

CONDUCT PROBLEMS REVEALED IN A MENTAL HYGIENE SURVEY

Holding of breath.....	1
Tantrums .....	52
Spoiled child (stubborn, difficult, un-controlled)....	41
Excessive boldness .....	11
Excessive timidity and shyness.....	13
Excessive finickiness and precision.....	1
Running away .....	3
Truancy .....	2
Pilfering .....	1
Biting and scratching others.....	5
Seclusiveness .....	6
Capricious appetite .....	17
Imitativeness (excessive) .....	1
Masturbation .....	12
Thumb and finger sucking.....	10
Nail biting .....	33
Picking of nose, lips, and fingers.....	26
Gritting of teeth.....	3
Excessive jealousy .....	2

group of children were found various speech defects, motor incoordination, incontinence, disturbances of sleep, and mental deficiency. Drucker and Hexter in a very interesting volume<sup>4</sup> classify the twenty-four character sketches which they present under the following eight heads: truants, weaklings, wanderers, pilferers, characterially defective, precocious, sex problems, and intractables. It is obviously impossible for us to deal exhaustively with the varieties of misconduct displayed by young children. We can only insist on the importance of an intensive study of each "difficult" child to see what combination of native equipment and personal experiences is involved in his particular case. Whether there are certain general, fundamental causes of misconduct we do not know, but at least it

<sup>3</sup> Taylor, Marianna, *The Child and the Home*, Men. Hyg., 6: 746-772.

<sup>4</sup> Drucker, Saul, and Hexter, Maurice B., *Children Astray*.



is both necessary and possible to get at something more specific than the terms usually applied to "problem" children.

The physician who today tells a patient he is suffering from "inflammation of the bowels" is put down as an ignoramus, for the term means nothing, or anything from appendicitis to cancer of the stomach. What the term "inflammation of the bowels" is to medicine are certain terms to education—stupid, moody, indifferent, disinterested, inattentive, lazy, vicious, mean, ornery, nervous, irritable, hateful, unruly, insubordinate, incorrigible, troublesome, sulky, excitable, restless, untruthful, dishonest, etc., etc. Although the result may be disconcerting to the school, all these represent attempts in adjustment just as much as the placidity and docility of others. These things are analyzable, and have definite causes, although the causes may not be at all what they seem at first.<sup>5</sup>

**Some Causes of Maladjustment.**—During the past few years there have developed a number of research projects having as their primary aim the discovery of causal factors behind the social maladjustments of children which manifest themselves in misconduct. Some of the most fruitful work in this field is being done by the Judge Baker Foundation in Boston and the Child Guidance Clinics of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. A study made under the latter auspices<sup>6</sup> compares 500 "problem" children with a control group of 337 "unselected" children. It is of special interest to us, not merely because of the findings, but also because of the methods employed. In examining both groups of children, the techniques of medicine, psychiatry, psychology and social work were employed. Some of the results indicated that race and nationality could be eliminated as causal factors, but that sex was involved, there being almost twice as many boys as girls in the problem group. It was likewise discovered that mental retardation and mental defect, speech defects, physical ills, personal difficulties and misgrading in school occurred with very much greater frequency among the

<sup>5</sup> Williams, Frankwood E., in Nat. Conf. Soc. Work, 1921: 363.

<sup>6</sup> Blanchard, Phyllis, and Paynter, Richard H., *The Problem Child*, Men. Hyg., 8: 26-54.

problem children than in the control group. Careful analysis of 250 problem cases seemed to substantiate the belief that these are important factors in maladjustment. The following table indicates the number of times each factor named appeared to be important in the causation of the misconduct.

CAUSATIVE FACTORS IN 250 PROBLEM CASES.<sup>7</sup>

	Number.	Per cent.
Bad home conditions.....	139	55.6
Personality difficulties .....	128	51.2
Poor heredity .....	115	46.0
Poor physical condition.....	84	33.6
Mental retardation .....	79	31.6
Mental defect .....	70	28.0
Endocrine disturbance .....	38	15.2
Early illnesses .....	36	14.4
Bad companions .....	33	13.2
Irregular attendance and changes of school .....	28	11.2
Emotional conflicts .....	27	10.8
Loss of interest and poor effort in school .....	21	8.4
Lack of proper recreation.....	21	8.4
Neurotic make-up .....	20	8.0

The original table includes nineteen additional factors each of which appeared less than twenty times. The impossibility of adding the per cent column and securing a total of 100 is due to the fact that in almost every case there was found not a single cause of maladjustment, but a series of causes.

Another interesting search for the causes of maladjustment in childhood was Tjaden's study of 26 boys of superior intelligence (I. Q. ranging from 1.08 to 1.36) at the Iowa State Training School for Boys.<sup>8</sup> He found sex interest standing out prominently, in spite of the fact that not one of the boys had been committed because of a sex offense. Some of them were indulging in autoerotic prac-

<sup>7</sup> *Loc. cit.*, p. 34.

<sup>8</sup> Tjaden, J. C., *The Causes of Delinquency in Boys of Superior Intelligence*, Iowa Bul. of State Inst., 25: 245-331.



tices; others had affairs with girls; practically none had had rational sex instruction. The influence of companions played an important rôle in the majority of these cases. Sometimes there were gangs which told "smutty" stories, showed suggestive pictures of girls, smoked, gambled, and even planned definite crimes. The influence of such associates seemed to be strongest on boys who had a sense of inferiority and who were stimulated to anti-social acts in order to measure up to the standard of their fellows. Even when there was no direct evidence of "bad" companions, this sense of inferiority seemed to be a powerful motive to misconduct. In some cases there was an effort to compensate for physical defects by behavior which would attract attention and bring recognition.

In half of the cases there was definite history of family friction involving on the part of the boy what is sometimes called the "Oedipus complex." This usually took the form of rebellion against a harsh, unsympathetic father, which passed over into revolt against all constituted authority. With a number of the boys it was not so much conflict as simple absence of affection. The lack of parental affection seemed to turn their attention inward upon themselves, so that they failed to develop the capacity to get along with other people. For a few boys trouble centered about stupid and over-zealous religious instruction. One lad's step-mother tried to make an evangelist of him; his reaction against this was quite violent and was carried over to other phases of life.

#### **Some Consequences of Maladjustment in Childhood.—**

It is well at this point to recall the distinction made in the first chapter between unadjustment and maladjustment. Unadjustment stands for the sort of thing that happens right along in the life of everyone who is anything more than a human vegetable. We are always meeting new situations in which we find our established habits and attitudes inadequate. We can not get along under the new conditions without making some changes in our accustomed modes of behavior. But most of us do succeed after a little time in altering our practices and our attitudes enough to meet

most of the varied situations into which we may come. It is when such readjustment is delayed or fails to take place at all that trouble appears. If there is repeated failure to find a *modus vivendi*, there are several consequences which may develop. The child may lose confidence in himself and stop trying; he may seek to make up for outward failure by retiring within himself and living in a world of phantasy; he may become irritable and erratic, fly into tantrums and "go to pieces" in various ways; feeling himself shut out of the usual participation in group life, he may develop a spirit of hostility and vengeance—since "everyman's hand is against him," he "will show the world a thing or two." Out of these childish experiences may grow adult attitudes and practices. Many a case of criminality and many a case of mental disease may be traced back to the maladjustments of childhood. It is in these later and more serious consequences that society pays the heaviest price for neglecting to straighten out the social problems of children. Evidence in support of these statements will appear in later chapters which deal with various sorts of adult maladjustments.

**Agencies Which Deal With "Problem" Children.**—From the foregoing it may easily be gathered that conduct problems of children appear first to parents, school teachers, physicians, or social workers. The agencies to which these people turn for help in dealing with children whose behavior is out of the ordinary include the juvenile court and probation officers, school attendance officers, special classes in the school system, visiting teachers, psychiatric and psychological clinics, child guidance clinics, habit clinics for children of pre-school age, parental schools, private and public industrial schools. In preceding chapters we have made the acquaintance of the juvenile court and of children's institutions. In this chapter we shall devote special attention to the visiting teacher, the child guidance clinic and the habit clinic.

**The Visiting Teacher.**—Since 1906 the school systems of a growing number of American cities have added to their staff persons variously known as visiting teachers or



school visitors. These are usually women who have had training and experience in two fields, schoolroom teaching and social case work. Their function is to make intensive studies of children who present conduct problems at school and work out plans for their readjustment. In making the social diagnosis they depend a great deal upon the cooperation of physicians, psychologists, psychiatrists, teachers and social workers. Having got at what seem to be the pertinent facts, they devise and undertake to carry out a plan which involves more than anything else the interpretation to one another of the "problem" child, the parents and others in the family, the teacher and others at school. Primarily the task is one of changing attitudes—attitudes of child toward school, of teacher toward child, of parents toward school, of other pupils toward the "unusual" child. This changing of attitudes is sometimes effected through more or less mechanical changes in the environment, such as promotion, demotion, transfer to another school or class of the same grade, transfer to a special school or class, removal of the home to a new neighborhood, or removal from the natural parents. Sometimes the change of attitudes is effected simply through an explanation to the parents of the need for regular hours, a quiet place to study at home, encouragement in school work, or a reduction in household duties. Sometimes it is the teacher who needs to receive the explanation of the child's physical condition, special abilities or disabilities, home experiences or play interests, in order that she may modify her program for him. Sometimes results are secured by talking to the child about the importance of education or the reasons for studying certain subjects. Sometimes new recreational interests are developed, substituting Boy Scouts or Campfire Girls for street gang or movies. Sometimes pride and self-respect are promoted by new clothes. Sometimes friction is relieved by helping foreign-born parents to understand the rapid "Americanization" of their children. Sometimes improved physical health removes irritability and promotes a happy disposition. The following example may serve to illustrate some of the prob-

lems encountered and some of the methods employed by the visiting teacher.<sup>9</sup>

Archie, 13 years old, in 8A, was reported as "D" in conduct. He was able to do his work, but made little effort. The mother had been sent for without success. When the visiting teacher stated the reason for her call, the mother exclaimed, "I know all about him. I can't help it, send him away!" The visiting teacher drew out that she was irritated by ill-health, the decline of the business at which she had overworked, and her "bad boy." Archie had refused to remain at home and take instruction from the Rabbi. He owed the library for a lost book and so the parents had forbidden him to read. He must not join the Boy Scouts as they "would make him a soldier." Everything he liked was forbidden. After school he helped his father in his shop.

Being naturally fond of reading he spent his pennies on the cheapest books he could buy, and read them secretly at night. Consequently, in school the next day he was not a promising pupil.

After considerable persuasion, the mother accepted the visiting teacher's suggestions of change of treatment. She allowed Archie to join the Scouts, to draw books from the library, and the class teacher supplied a list of helpful books. He had "A" in conduct next month and there were no further complaints. He was promoted at the end of the term. Frequently the mother has exclaimed that the visiting teacher's advice was "worth a hundred dollars" to her as she had been most desperate and discouraged over her son's conduct.

**The Child Guidance Clinic.**—More recent even than the visiting teachers are child guidance clinics, special organizations for the study and treatment of "problem" children. These have developed largely under the influence of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene which has established a number of experimental and demonstration clinics, some of which have been taken over by the communities in which they are located. The staff of such a clinic is composed of a psychiatrist, a psychologist, social workers and clerical assistants. The psychiatrist, it should be clear by this time, is a physician especially trained in the problems of nervous and mental diseases. His part of the examination is to study the physical condition of the child

<sup>9</sup> *The Visiting Teacher*, New York Pub. Ed. Ass'n, 1921, pp. 35-36.



and analyze his personality from the standpoint of its inner workings. The psychologist is responsible especially for determining the level of intelligence, the degree of educational progress and special abilities and disabilities. The social workers are expected to assemble all pertinent information concerning the history of the child's family and of his own personal experiences. Taken together these constitute an analysis of personality.

The treatment which follows the diagnosis in a child guidance clinic falls rather naturally into four parts, although each is intimately bound up with the other three. First of all, there are medical measures which will contribute to the general physical condition of the child, overcoming weaknesses, removing sources of irritation. Some of the most commonly used medical measures are operations for adenoids, mastoids and other centers of infection. What may be called psychiatric treatment involves measures intended to relieve the child's mind of worry, distressing thoughts and compulsions to do things. This kind of treatment consists largely of intimate personal talks with the psychiatrist rather than the administration of drugs or application of the surgeon's knife. Educational treatment involves placing the child in the class and in the school that can best meet his needs,—bearing in mind both his general level of intelligence and his special abilities and limitations. It frequently requires, also, individual attention, making a school program which is relatively unique in order to win the child's interest, develop such capacity as he has and avoid undertaking to teach him things he cannot learn. In one sense all these are parts of social treatment because they are directed toward the readjustment of the child in his relations to other people. In a more limited sense, however, social treatment includes such things as modification of the home environment, placement in foster home, institutional care, introduction to new recreational groups and the interpretation to each other of the child and his associates.

**The Habit Clinic.**—Very similar in many respects to the child guidance clinic is the habit clinic, another agency

of quite recent appearance (1921). Perhaps the principal difference is in the age of the children and hence in the specific problems they present. The personnel and general procedure are much the same. The habit clinics usually deal only with children under school age. The problems they meet most frequently have to do with feeding (refusal of food, unwillingness to feed self, regurgitation, vomiting), enuresis (bed-wetting), masturbation and other sex experience, temper tantrums, pugnacity, shyness and destructiveness. Children are referred to the clinics by visiting nurses, physicians and dietitians at health clinics, kindergarten teachers and others who may tell the parents about them. Psychiatrist, psychologist and social worker together seek to understand the child, especially to find the causes of the undesirable habit, and to correct it, largely through explanation to the parents, outlining a plan of treatment (social rather than medical), lending encouragement to both parents and child, and following them up to see what results are achieved. The interesting thing to us is that most of the problems met involve physical health only incidentally. Primarily they are matters of the child's attitudes and relations to other members of the household. Hence they are dealt with as fundamentally sociological rather than physiological difficulties.

**Prevention of Misconduct in Children.**—He would be an optimist indeed who would imagine that it might be possible to eliminate all conduct problems which appear in young children, yet there is evidence that it is possible to prevent at least the persistence and aggravation of unadjustments which, relatively easy to deal with at the outset, soon become exceedingly difficult. Some of the causal factors which are subject to control are indicated in the following advice offered by Dr. Frankwood E. Williams, Medical Director of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene.<sup>10</sup>

Children should never be frightened. Frightening children is a very serious matter, although many careless adults take it as a joke. Frights in childhood often bring serious consequences.

<sup>10</sup> Men. Hyg. Bul., Sept., 1923.



Children must be taught to act in ways that are socially acceptable, but this should not be brought about through shaming them. Shame is not a healthy emotion to bring into the life of a child; neither is humiliation nor embarrassment nor painful self-consciousness before others.

Children should not be lied to concerning important matters, especially about the matter of sex. The lying and deceit are soon discovered, and the experience is exceedingly bad for the child. Much of the unhappiness, worry, and failure at school, and the nervous illnesses of young adolescents, as well as the nervous and mental breakdowns of later life, are due to the misunderstanding of these matters that has been brought about by the lying and deceit of others. It is of very great importance that this be avoided. The questions of a child along these lines should be answered honestly and without embarrassment, in accordance with the ability of the child to understand.

Every effort should be made to keep the child from developing feelings of inferiority. Parents and teachers often create these feelings in a child by calling it names that indicate that they do not think very highly of the child, or by comparing the child with another child unfairly. "Mary is real smart, but John is dumb." No parent or teacher would permit such a remark in the presence of John, if he understood the lasting harm that it is likely to do John, particularly if often repeated.

There come times when children must be punished. Children can be punished in ways that benefit them; on the other hand, most unhappy consequences may follow unwise punishment. Punishment should be fair, reasonable, and prompt. It should not be arbitrary or merely an expression of the whim of a parent or teacher, disregarding the child's sense of fairness and justice. Punishment that is merely an expression of a parent's or teacher's anger, creates a perfectly proper anger and rebellion on the part of the child. The parent or teacher in losing his self-control is misbehaving worse than the child, and the child knows it. Such punishment may create fear in a child, so that it "minds," but its good behavior is purchased at too high a price, for the reason that the hatred of, and rebellion against, authority becomes a fixed emotional habit leading to great difficulties later on.

In helping the child to develop healthy mental habits, as we help it to develop good physical habits, it is well to keep in mind one fundamental principle—to permit the child as much freedom of expression as possible, allowing him to find an expression for himself and his own particular interests in his play, in his work, and in his contact with other members of the family. Where this expression is unwise or unsafe or interferes with the rights of others, a wise parent will direct the child's energy into other and better channels, but without forcing a repression on the child that will be harmful.

Help the child to maintain its own self-respect. Do not by word or action take away from it what self-respect it has. A parent who gains control over his child by breaking the child's spirit is an unworthy parent.

And finally it should be remembered that if one desires to cultivate healthy mental habits in one's child, it is well to do a little cultivating in one's own personal garden.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Describe children you have seen, presenting conduct problems such as those described in this chapter. How did adults try to meet them? With what success?
2. Describe any similar difficulties of your own childhood which you can remember or learn about from parents.
3. Visit a habit clinic or a child guidance clinic and report on:
  - a. Personnel—duties, training, experience, salaries
  - b. Channels through which children come
  - c. Methods of studying the children
  - d. Methods of correcting difficulties
  - e. Relation to other agencies
4. Interview a visiting teacher, school attendance officer and probation officer. Get from each a description of his work, nature of problems met, methods employed, cooperation with other social workers.
5. Visit a parental school and report on:
  - a. Plant and equipment—draw plans of grounds and buildings, describe them and their furnishings
  - b. Organization—draw chart
  - c. Commitment and dismissal—by what authority, length of stay
  - d. Personnel—duties, training, experience, salaries
  - e. Daily schedule
  - f. Dietary and method of serving food
  - g. Schooling
  - h. Tasks assigned about buildings and grounds
  - i. Discipline
  - j. Clothing and personal possessions
  - k. Record system
6. Visit an industrial school for wayward children and make a similar report.
7. Secure published reports of public and private institutions caring for problem children. Analyze these with reference to the interrelation of social adjustments and the development of personality.
8. Study laws of your state which pertain to juvenile delinquency and to any of the agencies or institutions mentioned above.



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## CHAPTER VIII

### THE ILLEGITIMATE FAMILY

#### RUTH GAINES—AN UNMARRIED MOTHER <sup>1</sup>

*The Girl and Her Trouble.*—A woman physician one day in 1919 called at the office of a social agency in an eastern city, bringing with her Ruth Gaines, for whom she asked attention and hospital care. This is how it all came about.

Ruth, who was 22 years old, lived with her father in a town of 5,000, some distance from the city. Her mother died when she was 7 and since she was 13 she had been keeping house for her father. She attended grammar school until she was 16, but received no further education. In 1917 she became engaged to Robert Wood, a young soldier, who later went to France. They corresponded, of course, but after a time letters stopped coming, and for several months Ruth did not hear from Robert. He had been taken prisoner.

About this time, that is, in 1918, Mr. Gaines took into his home a boarder, Frank Huxley, by name, a teamster, working at the time for a near-by mill operator. What happened after that is hard to tell, for Ruth and Frank tell conflicting stories. According to Ruth, Frank urged her to marry him, but she refused; then one day when her father was away, Frank assaulted her with the result that she became pregnant. Frank maintains that he did not assault Ruth, but that they had intimate relations for some time, and that she also went with other men. At all

<sup>1</sup> This is a summary of Red Cross Teaching Record No. 10. The original may be secured in mimeographed form from the American National Red Cross, Washington, D. C.

events, Mr. Gaines insisted that the two should marry. Frank consented, but Ruth refused, became hysterical and threatened to kill herself.

Shortly after this Ruth came to the city for her confinement, and with the expectation of having the child adopted immediately after its birth. She planned then to return to her father's home. A neighbor of Ruth's happened to be a relative of the woman physician and thus the girl came to the office of the social agency.

The Gaines home was situated on a much traveled road, and several neighbors lived nearby. Outside the appearance of house and grounds was very neat. Inside it was attractive and cozy, although simply furnished.

*Mr. Gaines* was a tall, thin man with a stern expression. He was an unskilled laborer employed in a local mill and owned the small farm on which they lived. From the neighbors it was learned that he and his wife were unhappy together, and that she finally ran away with another man. (Ruth apparently knew nothing about this.) Since then Mr. Gaines had not mingled much with people in a social way and had shown no interest in women. He had never wanted to marry a second time, fearing that he might be "again disappointed." He said he had "no faith in women—Ruth was his only comfort." He was evidently devoted to his daughter, watched over her carefully through her girlhood, and tried in every way possible to take the place of her mother. He was looking forward to the time when Robert Wood, "one of the finest young men in the country," would become his son and live in his home. Now the old man was bitter and heart-broken. He could not forget that Ruth had brought disgrace not only upon her father, "but on Robert." He wanted Ruth to return home after her confinement, for it was lonely without her, but he refused to permit the baby in the house or to contribute toward its support.

Practically nothing more was known about Ruth's mother or the relatives on either side of the house.

Ruth appeared to be physically and mentally sound in every way. However, although she received a thorough



medical examination, she was not seen by a psychologist or a psychiatrist. Hence, for a decision as to her mentality we must depend on the observations of social workers and the reports of those who had known Ruth for a long time.

We have already noted that Ruth never went beyond the grammar grades in her formal schooling. As to religion she was a member of the Methodist Church and active in the Missionary Society. She had always lived with her father and was never employed outside the home.

*Summary of the Diagnosis.*—What were the factors, favorable and unfavorable, with which the social workers had to deal in their efforts to help Ruth Gaines? First, on the positive side, Ruth seemed to be a healthy, normal girl both in body and mind. Her heredity was practically unknown, but no reason appeared for assuming the inheritance of undesirable traits. There was no evidence that her mother's behavior influenced the girl directly. But indirectly it must have played a large part in shaping the conditions of her life. It was responsible for her having to grow up without a mother's care and for the rather stern oversight of her father. No doubt there was an unsatisfied longing for affection which made it easier to yield to the advances of Frank Huxley. The reasons for Mr. Gaines' taking Huxley into their home are not clear. Perhaps there were financial difficulties. In any case, a mistake was made.

The most troublesome elements in the situation were the approaching birth of an unwanted child and a social ostracism which was likely to make life very hard for both Ruth and her baby. Having erred once and feeling the scorn of "good" society she might come to feel "Oh, what's the use?" Most of the neighbors felt as her father did at first, that she should marry Frank Huxley "to give her child a name." But she rebelled and perhaps it was well that she did. What sort of a family life would they be apt to have? Ruth's father was bitter, but he was willing that she should return to their home, providing she left the baby behind.

*Prognosis and Recommendations.*—With the record of

good health and good habits and the opportunity to return to her old home for a "new start in life" it would seem that the prospects for Ruth's "going straight" were rather good. However, there was considerable room for doubt as to the effect of taking her child away. This appeared to be a necessary condition of her return, yet it might remove the only way her longing for affection could be satisfied. Moreover, even if she did leave the child, one could not be sure that the neighbors and church people would not give Ruth "the cold shoulder." If Robert Wood were still willing to marry her, the past might be forgotten by the community, but it would always be a potential source of family friction.

With all these things in mind it was decided that Ruth should go after her confinement to a convalescent home. While she regained her strength and cared for her baby, without undue haste, everybody—Ruth herself, her father, Robert Wood and the social workers—could be thinking and discussing, "what is best to do?"

*What Was Actually Done.*—For two weeks before her confinement Ruth stayed in a Home maintained by one of the city's social agencies. Then for two weeks she was in a maternity hospital, going from it to a convalescent home where she remained for a month. During this time the social workers of the city were in correspondence with the Home Service Section of the Red Cross of the town in which Mr. Gaines lived. The Red Cross people saw Mr. Gaines, Robert Wood, Frank Huxley and others from whom they secured much information and with whom they consulted.

One plan that was considered, but given up because of the publicity it would entail, was that of having Huxley arrested and bringing suit to compel support of the child. At no time was Ruth urged to give up her baby; instead, she was encouraged to keep it.

Ruth for some time clung to the hope that if she could only get rid of the child Robert Wood would marry her. She corresponded with him. He showed himself sympathetic, but eventually made it plain that he did not want



to marry her. The continued care of the baby had the natural result that presently Ruth did not want to relinquish him. Although she was still anxious to go home, "it must not be without the baby." She seemed deeply attached to her father also, and expressed constant anxiety over his being left alone.

Mr. Gaines, in turn, grew more and more lonesome, longed for Ruth's return and felt too the need of a housekeeper. He was disappointed that the social agency did not remove the baby immediately after its birth, and said that he did not want "the child of such a father" around. But he finally agreed that if Ruth wanted to "ruin her chances of ever marrying" he would let her bring the baby home with her. He insisted, however, that he would "never feel the same toward her."

So Ruth went back to her old home with the baby. A few days after her arrival she wrote to the social workers in the city: "It sure seems good to be home and Papa is sure glad to have me here again. I can see that he has begun to love the baby already. . . . A couple of times yesterday while I was out of the room where baby was he began to cry and when I came back in Papa was holding him. And Miss T. I am so glad I decided to bring him home. I am sure he is going to be a comfort to us."

*The Outcome.*—Robert Wood saw Ruth occasionally, but made no proposal of marriage. Mr. Gaines never seemed to get over the fact that "he had loved Robert Wood and had lost him as a son." Friends and neighbors immediately received Ruth into the community life. She resumed her activities in the church, and several people expressed satisfaction over the fact that Ruth had not disposed of her baby.

During the early winter Ruth met John Fielding, a young salesman, who, although knowing about her former trouble, did not allow it to affect his apparent attachment to her, or his later offer of marriage. A few months later the wedding took place. After about a year the home was visited again. Mr. Fielding was working steadily; Ruth was happy, contented and devoted to her baby, her husband

and her father. Mr. Gaines continued to make his home with them, even though it meant a long, cold drive to his work during the winter.

Robert Wood lived alone, took no part in the community life and "little interest in anything about him." Mr. Gaines remarked to the social worker that he "supposed Robert would never have Ruth now, no matter what happened, and that the boy's life was a tragedy."

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Some of our readers may have wondered why we chose the title at the head of this chapter. We are not sure that it is wholly justified, but its use is supported by the fact that every instance of illegitimacy involves a man, a woman and a child. In the biological sense, at least, there is a family. From the sociological point of view, it is no less necessary to consider these three persons and their interrelations, but frequently there is no lasting attachment, no real social group. The legal status of the three is entirely dependent upon the state or nation in which they live. In some states they might constitute a common-law family; in others no marriage would be recognized by the law, but upon establishment of paternity the father could be held responsible for support of the child; in still others the mother and child would be left to shift for themselves. Questions of name and of inheritance are met in equally diverse ways. We have before us the record of a man who, while maintaining the home of his legal wife and her children, also supported and lived part of the time with another woman to whom he was not married, but by whom he had two children. In such a case as this the term "illegitimate family" seems to be quite properly used. Perhaps a better term would be "illegal family" or "extra-legal family."

Historically and conventionally, of course, the word "illegitimate" is a term of opprobrium applied to the child of an unmarried woman. "Polite" society ignores the fact that the child has a father as well as a mother, and that logically there is every reason for believing that he took



as active a part in the whole affair as did the woman. It is still "good form" to condemn the unmarried mother, stigmatize the "illegitimate" child, and forget the unmarried father. In this traditional attitude lies the heart of the social problem of illegitimacy.

**Extent of Illegitimacy.**—Because of popular attitudes concerning this problem it is exceedingly difficult to determine its extent. Additional difficulties are found in the incompleteness of birth registration in many states, laws which forbid the statement of illegitimacy in a birth certificate and the undoubted fact that many false entries are made by physicians and others reporting births. Most of the available figures are calculated in terms of the percentage of live births reported illegitimate. In 1920,<sup>2</sup> the percentages for twenty-eight states ranged from seven-tenths of 1 per cent in Kansas, Nevada, and South Dakota, to 3 per cent in Missouri. The percentages for twenty-one cities having more than 100,000 population, ranged from 1.1 in New York to 13.6 in Kansas City. That all these figures are affected by the presence of various racial elements is made plain by the difference between the percentages for white and colored births wherever these are separately recorded. For example, in Maryland, the white illegitimacy rate in 1920 was 1.7; the negro rate was 19.5. It is also evident that the presence of large cities affects the percentage of illegitimacy in a state. Thus the 1920 rate in Minnesota was 1.8; in both Minneapolis and St. Paul it was 3.9. On the basis of such data as could be had, and undertaking to make due allowance for differences of race, nationality, religion, occupation, cities, etc., the Children's Bureau estimated that for 1915 there were probably at least 35,000 illegitimate white births in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

It is interesting to compare our American figures with those of European countries. In doing so, however, we should remember that most European statistics are much more complete than our own and that there are differences in laws and folkways which must be taken into account.

<sup>2</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 128, pp. 238-9.

<sup>3</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 66, pp. 26-7.

The average percentage of live births which were reported to be illegitimate in the years just before the War, ranged from 2.1 in the Netherlands to 15.5 in Saxony. The percentages in European cities for a slightly earlier period ranged from 2.6 in Birmingham to 33.5 in Stockholm. With the exception of England and Wales the city rates were uniformly higher than those for the country as a whole. On the surface, it looks as though "immorality" was much more widespread in Europe than America. But no such conclusion is justified by these data. As already indicated, our figures are so incomplete as not to be fairly comparable with those of European countries. In some parts of Europe the legal requirements and the popular customs with reference to marriage are so in conflict that many children are commonly regarded as legitimate, but legally classified as illegitimate. Also among certain peasant groups the custom of pre-marital relations between young people is quite approved and is not regarded as involving any stigma upon parents or child.

**Who the Unmarried Parents Are.**—For obvious reasons it is easier to get information about unmarried mothers than about unmarried fathers. However, we are fortunate to have some statistical data assembled concerning both.<sup>4</sup> Such studies as have been made indicate that the mothers are for the most part between 18 and 24 years of age with a considerable number under 16. The overwhelming majority of them are native-born Americans of the white race, but the proportion of illegitimacy among negroes is far greater than among white women. By far the greatest number are single, small percentages being married, widowed or divorced. They seem to be fairly evenly distributed among various religious groups; for the most part they have had little formal schooling and are found more frequently in the city than in the country. Most of them are reported to have been of good character, so far as known, and the great majority examined appeared to be

<sup>4</sup> Mangold, Geo. B., *Children Born Out of Wedlock*, p. 59 ff.; *Illegitimacy as a Child-Welfare Problem*, Part III, U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 128, p. 240 ff.



of normal mentality. A good many came from broken homes, a considerable number having left home under the age of 14 years. Among the occupational groups, domestic servants figure most prominently; with factory and laundry workers, waitresses, store clerks, and students reported in significant numbers.

The unmarried fathers are, on the average, several years older than the mothers. Race and nativity correspond very closely, but in marital condition, there is an important contrast. While the majority are single, from a fifth to a third are reported to be married and perhaps half that number are widowed and divorced. Occupationally they represent a much wider variety than do the mothers. They include professional men, clerks and salesmen, skilled laborers and unskilled workmen.

**Causes of Illegitimacy.**—Any adequate explanation of the incidence of illegitimacy would require a thorough investigation of conditions directly affecting both the unmarried fathers and the unmarried mothers—such conditions as physical and mental development, training and opportunities. It would require also a careful study of conditions affecting the whole population and only incidentally including unmarried parents—such conditions as the numbers of unmarried adults, the ratio of the sexes, popular attitudes toward extra-marital relations, the use of contraceptive measures, the “double standard” of morals and clashes between the folkways and statute law. There has been little investigation of these social factors, but such data as we have lend credence to the following hypotheses. (1) That the high proportion of illegitimate births in some places, for example, in Germany before the War, was due to legal requirements of a civil marriage ceremony, while popular sentiment in many sections regarded the religious ceremony as sufficient. (2) That the apparently high illegitimacy rate in such a country as Japan is a result of popular approval of pre-marital intercourse. (3) That the presumably low rate among women of the “upper” classes is due to knowledge of and willingness to employ contraceptive and abortive measures. (4) That the high

rate in many cities is due to the presence of a large proportion of unmarried young men and women whose work is monotonous and wages are low, and the fact that many country girls go to the city to "hide their shame."

Because of the difficulties involved in identifying the unmarried fathers, very little information is available concerning conditions which affect them. Hence our discussion must unfortunately be limited for the most part to conditions which directly affect unmarried mothers. The following table summarizes the results of Kammerer's analysis of 500 records.

CAUSATIVE FACTORS IN ILLEGITIMACY <sup>5</sup>

Groups of causative factors.	Number of times a major factor.	Number of times a minor factor.	Total number of times appeared as factors.
Bad environment .....	29	56	85
Bad companions .....	8	136	144
Recreational disadvantages...	..	22	22
Educational disadvantages...	..	20	20
Bad home conditions.....	194	158	352
Early sex experience.....	..	25	25
Physical abnormality .....	6	53	59
Sexual suggestibility .....	27	16	43
Sexually suggestible by one individual .....	38	4	42
Abnormal sexualism .....	1	1	2
Mental conflicts .....	3	2	5
Defects of heredity.....	..	48	48
Assault, rape, incest.....	14	..	14
Not analyzed .....	13	..	..
<hr/>			
Total .....	333		
Suggestive of mental abnormality and not included for this reason .....	167		
<hr/>			
500			

**Personal Factors in Sex Irregularity.**—It should be remembered that the foregoing is a list of causative factors

<sup>5</sup> Kammerer, Percy, *The Unmarried Mother*, p. 320.



identified in the cases of girls and women whose irregular conduct resulted in motherhood. Since extra-marital childbirth, which is the distinguishing mark of illegitimacy, is usually an unintended and often prevented outcome, it is important that we should seek for causes of illicit sex relations in general as well as those which happen to lead to parenthood. The factors which various studies have revealed as being involved in this type of misconduct may, for convenience, be classed as personal and environmental; and the personal factors may in turn be roughly grouped as physical and mental.

Dr. Healy has perhaps given us the best statement of the physical factors.<sup>6</sup> He describes a number of cases involving irritation of sex organs, excessive sex impulses sometimes apparently inherited, and premature development of sex organs. However, Dr. Healy himself does not rate these as the most important causes and W. I. Thomas<sup>7</sup> states, after studying 3,000 cases, that:

The beginning of delinquency in girls is usually an impulse to get amusement, adventure, pretty clothes, favorable notice, distinction, freedom in the larger world which presents so many allurements and comparisons. The cases which I have examined (about three thousand) show that sexual passion does not play an important rôle, for the girls have usually become "wild" before the development of sexual desire, and their casual sexual relations do not usually awaken sex feeling. Their sex is used as a condition of the realization of other wishes. It is their capital. . . .

Most students of this problem believe that mental deficiency and mental abnormality are very frequently among the causes. Mangold<sup>8</sup> cites the results of numerous investigations which variously rate the percentage of unmarried mothers who are feeble-minded from 7 per cent to 98 per cent. But he points out that the higher percentages were reported from groups of women who were in other legal or economic difficulties. Feeble-mindedness and mental imbalance doubtless greatly increase the probability of an

<sup>6</sup> Healy, Wm., *The Individual Delinquent*, See index.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas, W. I., *The Unadjusted Girl*, p. 109.

<sup>8</sup> Mangold, Geo. B., *Children Born Out of Wedlock*, pp. 41-47.

irregular sex life, involving, as they do, lack of foresight, weakened powers of inhibition and tendency to yield to the impulse of the moment. Moreover, of those girls and women who indulge in sex relations the subnormal and the abnormal will be less likely to understand or use contraceptive measures. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that many unmarried mothers are normally intelligent and relatively well-balanced young women, as was Ruth Gaines. Sometimes when the native capacity and emotional balance are good there is ignorance. Mangold refers to a report which indicated that 44 out of 163 girls did not know the probable consequences of their act.<sup>9</sup> These figures are likely too high, but there is certainly a great deal of misinformation if not actual ignorance of the sex functions.

**Environmental Factors.**—Among the factors which may be described as environmental are living in a “vicious” neighborhood, living or working near “vicious” resorts, working for “immoral” foremen or employers, working where exposed to the advances of strange men, as in hotels, restaurants and barber shops, and being away from home without protection. It will be remembered that in Kammerer’s table quoted above, “bad” home conditions constituted the most numerous groups of causal factors. More specifically, these include quarreling, abuse or other irritating conditions in the home, the presence of alcoholic or immoral parents, parental neglect; which in turn may be due to employment of the mother, illness, ignorance, recent migration, low standards of living, home broken by death, separation, divorce, and sometimes poverty and overcrowding. Concerning these last two there is apparently a good deal of popular misunderstanding. Because they are tangible and obvious, many casual observers seem to think that they are important factors in leading to “immorality,” but careful studies show that in spite of the fact that overcrowding tends to break down modesty, there is no positive correlation between the number of rooms per capita and the presence or absence of illegitimacy.

<sup>9</sup> Mangold, *op. cit.*, p. 48.



Poverty, likewise, is not an established factor, for in many homes on a very low economic level, there is no indication of delinquency of any kind. The influence of poverty is in nearly all cases indirect and operates by intensifying bad conditions already existing. As to broken homes, Mangold<sup>10</sup> cites statistics from a number of studies which indicate that something like two-thirds of all delinquent girls come from broken homes. Although these figures are based on the entire group committed, nearly one-half of the total were guilty of sex offenses.

Another group of environmental factors centers about recreation. There is a good deal of evidence that for many young people sex irregularities may be traced pretty directly to unsupervised dance halls, amusement parks, low grade theaters, cabarets and excursion steamers. The use of the automobile has likewise added to the number of opportunities for adventure free from the restraints of one's usual surroundings. These forms of recreation are particularly significant, because for many working girls there is little home life, few friends and slight opportunity for wholesome enjoyment. Usually correlated with demoralizing recreational facilities are companions who stimulate to misconduct.<sup>11</sup>

In a study whose results have not yet been published Miss Evelyn Buchan is discovering some relations between neighborhood disorganization and sex irregularities.<sup>12</sup> In her analysis she uses a device called "the delinquency triangle." The three corners of the triangle are located by spotting on a map the girl's home, the home of her male companion and the place of delinquency. Three typical forms of the triangle soon appeared. In the first type all three points of the triangle are located within the territory occupied by a local group. This is known as the "neighborhood triangle." "In this case the intimacy of the boy and girl might be little more than the continuance in this

<sup>10</sup> Mangold, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>11</sup> Judge Baker Foundation, Case No. 15, Series I.

<sup>12</sup> A brief summary of this analysis is included in a paper by E. W. Burgess. *Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk.*, 1924: 409.

country of old-world folkways, but without the protection for the girl in subsequent marriage which the European peasant mores afford." In the second type, called the "mobility triangle," the two points representing the homes of the boy and the girl are located within a single neighborhood or community, but the place of delinquency is outside. "In this case the bright light area becomes a place of freedom from the narrower, distant controls of the home and the neighborhood." Type three is called the "triangle of promiscuity" because no two of the points lie in the same local area. "The intimacy developing from the casual acquaintance of the metal worker from the steel mills with the girl from the West Side, whom he 'picked up' at an amusement park, may be so transient that neither knows the family name or the address of the other." The significant fact that seems to stand out in Miss Buchan's study is the relatively high proportion of cases in which the triangle is of the third type.

Finally, among environmental factors, should be named war, militarism and vocations which require the living apart of large numbers of men. One of the most definite measures of the influence of war, its glamour, excitement and release from conventional morality, is to be found in the illegitimacy rates of certain European cities from 1913 to 1917.<sup>13</sup> In Paris the percentages of illegitimate births increased from 23.8 in 1912 to 31.7 in 1917. In London, the percentage increased from 4.5 in 1914, to 8.0 in 1918. In contrast, however, to these figures, are those from Berlin where the percentages increased only from 23.3 in 1913 to 23.8 in 1916.

**Problems Faced by the Unmarried Mother.**—The problems faced by the unmarried mother may be summarily stated in terms of (1) threatened loss of social status, (2) recovery of lost social status, (3) acquisition of status in a new social group. (1) In order that she may not lose her standing in family, neighborhood, church or friendship circle, the first problem of the unmarried woman under the circumstances we are discussing may be how to prevent

<sup>13</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 66, p. 15.



conception. Failing in that, or perhaps not having considered it at all, her next problem is how to interrupt or conceal pregnancy. This may lead her to bring on a miscarriage or abortion. If the pregnancy cannot be prevented, the next problem is how to arrange a secret confinement, and after the birth the question is, shall she keep the child or dispose of it. If she decides to keep it, she will almost certainly lose, if she has not already lost, her social standing. But having decided to keep the child, she has the economic problem of how to support herself and infant. If her decision is against keeping the child, then her problem is how to dispose of it so that no one among her former associates may ever know of its existence. (2) If her plight is discovered by members of her own social group, the unmarried woman's problem is how to recover her lost standing. Shall she marry the father in order "to give her child a name," or to "make herself an honest woman"? If so, how can she induce him to marry her without unpleasant notoriety? If he refuses or if she prefers not to marry him anyway, how else may she recover the lost status? This may lead her to some form of religious or social penance, devotion to relatives or to the church. (3) If her old social status is lost and if she does not try to recover it, or if her attempt is a failure, her problem becomes that of acquiring status in a new group. If she is afraid to return home or has been rejected by her old associates, where shall she turn? Shall it be to the mission or to the rescue home? Shall she seek employment and residence in a new community or shall she turn to the life of the street? The mere enumeration of some of these problems should make plain the tremendous difficulties faced by the unmarried mother and should remind us that the story of Ruth Gaines has a rather unusually happy outcome.

**Handicaps of the Illegitimate Child.**—The hazards of being an illegitimate child may be roughly classified as physical, mental, economic, legal and social. The chances of an illegitimate child being stillborn are, according to various studies, about twice as great as those of the child

whose parents are married. If he is born alive, his chances of surviving infancy, are perhaps one-half to one-third those of legitimate children.<sup>14</sup> These tremendous hazards to life and health are of course not due to any physical differences between marital and extra-marital conception, but to the fact that the child is not wanted, and that efforts are frequently made to destroy his life before he is born. The confinement is frequently attended by unskilled or unscrupulous persons and soon after birth, the child is often turned over to someone who has very little interest in him. A Children's Bureau study shows that of the illegitimate children born in Boston, who survived one month, at least 20 per cent had already been separated from their mothers. This deprivation of the mother's care is not only a menace to health, but often involves many other handicaps, such as those discussed in Chapter V.

Even more general than the loss of a mother's care is the absence of a father's care and support. Studies made in various cities show that in 60 to 85 per cent of the cases the fathers made no contribution to the support of their illegitimate children.<sup>15</sup> In this respect, the circumstances of the child born out of wedlock are similar to those of the half-orphan whose father has died. The lack of the father's support usually means poverty and the necessity of living in unwholesome physical surroundings. The character of the mother or of the people into whose hands many illegitimate children are carelessly thrust may mean exposure to exploitation, immorality and other delinquencies.

The hazards we have named so far are largely physical and economic, but there is another group of handicaps which are primarily legal, social and mental.

The child born out of wedlock is at a disadvantage in regard to legal rights and social status. In the United States he can usually inherit from the mother but not from the father; his right to care and support from the father is in most cases only partially fulfilled, even though paternity is established through court action. He is frequently excluded from the benefits of such social

<sup>14</sup> Mangold, Geo. B., *op. cit.*, pp. 115-125; Kammerer, Percy, *op. cit.*, pp. 10-11; U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 75, pp. 88-101.

<sup>15</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 128, p. 244.



legislation as workmen's compensation acts and mothers' pensions. His birth record specifically or by implication reveals the fact of his illegitimate birth, and that record is frequently open to public inspection and may be used for malicious purposes; when he goes to school and a copy of his birth certificate is produced, the information concerning the circumstances of his birth is often needlessly revealed; when he goes to work he may be subjected to a similar experience. If he has been cared for apart from his parents from infancy he frequently must suffer from uncertainty as to their whereabouts and condition, and from a longing for knowledge of his heritage. He is sometimes subjected to scorn and undergoes humiliation because of his parentage.<sup>16</sup>

The mental suffering to which an illegitimate child may be subjected has already been suggested. One such child wrote as follows to the Division of Child Guardianship in Massachusetts.<sup>17</sup>

I would like to know where I was born and how old I was when I was put on the State, and what for did my Father and Mother die or what was the matter. Have I any brothers or sisters in the world or any friends? I am 17 years old the 25th of this month, just the rite age to learn a trade. Please write and tell me how things are as soon as possible. Your friend.

**Agencies that Serve Unmarried Mothers and Their Children.**—The agencies which serve unmarried mothers and their children may be classified in two general groups, institutions and case-work agencies. Among the institutions are commercial maternity homes, private charitable hospitals and maternity homes, rescue homes, almshouses and public hospitals. The largest number of maternity homes seem to be operated on a commercial basis. They secure their patronage mostly through advertisements and appeal particularly to the desire for secrecy. Frequently in their advertisements they offer to dispose of unwanted children. Many of these places are run by incompetent and disreputable midwives, nurses or physicians. They make all the money they can out of unfortunate girls, sometimes out of the putative fathers and not infrequently collect good-sized fees from persons who take the children.

<sup>16</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 75, p. 64.

<sup>17</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 75, p. 61.

Usually they keep no records, make no investigation of the foster home and contribute nothing to the rehabilitation of the unmarried mother. The almshouse is frequently quite as unsatisfactory as the commercial maternity home. In some respects it is worse, because of the publicity which may be involved. Rescue homes conducted by the Salvation Army or the Florence Crittenton Association, like the commercial homes, frequently advertise and are patronized to a considerable extent by girls coming from country districts to take advantage of the anonymity of the large city. These rescue homes make a great deal of the religious appeal, usually urge the mothers to keep their babies, sometimes give training in domestic service and find employment or reconcile the girls to their relatives and former friends. They do a modest amount of investigation and follow-up work, but are not usually found to keep adequate records or to do really satisfactory case work. Frequently their religious activities aggravate the emotional state of the unmarried mothers, and their insistence upon keeping the baby is sometimes found to have disastrous results. The private charitable maternity homes and hospitals range in the character of their work from most thorough scientific study and treatment, down to mere physical care during confinement. In the public hospitals much the same variety of service is found.

The case-work agencies which frequently render service to unmarried mothers and their children are child-placing societies, family welfare associations, girls' protective leagues, juvenile courts, children's bureaus and state supervisory boards. The child-placing societies are usually appealed to only after the child has been born and is perhaps several weeks old. They are rarely in a position to do effective work with the mother. The family welfare societies do not handle a large number of cases of illegitimacy, but are sometimes in a position to render valuable service at a time when it is most needed. The girls' protective bureaus are frequently appealed to before confinement; whenever this occurs they are able to make a study of the girl and her circumstances early enough to make a plan



which has some prospect of producing worth-while results. They frequently arrange for the hospital care and convalescence, find employment for the mother, provide a home for the child, reconcile mother and child with relatives and perform other similar services in accordance with the apparent needs of their various clients. The juvenile court may be invoked for the protection of the child or on behalf of the mother herself, if she be within the age limits established in the juvenile court law. In Minnesota the Children's Bureau of the State Board of Control is made responsible by law for attending to the interests of all children born out of wedlock. Instead of leaving the unmarried mothers to initiate proceedings on their own behalf, the Children's Bureau may of its own accord undertake investigations and court proceedings, and by regular case-work methods devise a plan for serving the best interests of mother and child. The Bureau may exercise guardianship over the child throughout its minority. Minnesota seems to have gone farther in the direction of definite public provision than any other state, but numbers of states have departments which supervise and regulate to a certain extent all private agencies dealing with mothers and their children.

**Kinds of Service Rendered.**—As has been suggested in the preceding paragraph, most of the agencies which have to do with unmarried mothers and their children are exceedingly limited in equipment and personnel. Many of the people engaged in this phase of social work are drawn to it by sentimental or perhaps even morbid motives. Very few have a true professional interest. But the difficulties encountered are so great that it is hazardous for any but the most skilled and experienced social case workers to undertake to perform the services required. These services include first, the prevention of infant mortality, involving provision for maternity care, care for the mother and her infant which will enable them to be together during the nursing period, medical and nursing supervision for the infants, and effective state supervision of private agencies and institutions. The second task is to insure a mother's

care. Sometimes this means making arrangements for the girl to take her baby back to her own family. In other cases it means boarding out mother and child; in still others, employment of the mother where she can have the baby with her. A third task is to secure a father's support. This may be brought about through marriage, through prosecution or through an agreement reached out of court. Probably the most frequent type of service rendered is to provide care for illegitimate children apart from their parents. In a large number of cases the father cannot be discovered and in most of the remainder a marriage would be a mistake. Prosecution involves painful publicity and court orders are difficult to enforce. Reconciliation of the mother with her family is not easy and it is difficult to find suitable positions for the mother where she can keep her child. Domestic service is about the only possibility and this is by no means suitable employment for all girls. Hence, a separation of the child seems often to be both necessary and wise. At all events it very frequently occurs. Sometimes the mother goes back to her family, leaving the child to be placed for adoption. Sometimes she secures employment and boards the child out, but more frequently she leaves it for adoption. The child-placing society in most cases has the mother sign a legal relinquishment, assumes guardianship and supervises the child at least until he is adopted.

In other words, these services may be physical, legal and social. On the physical side is the supervision of health of mother and child and the provision of means of subsistence. The legal function is essentially an exercise of the police power in the effort to prevent or correct abuse through birth registration, establishment of paternity, determining the father's responsibility, fixing inheritance rights, providing for legitimation and state supervision.<sup>18</sup> The social service is largely one of helping the unmarried mother to work out a scheme of life for herself and child and to carry it through. It means helping the girl over her immediate crisis and through the period of unadjust-

<sup>18</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 77, pp. 17-19.



ment. It means guidance in effecting an accommodation which may be reasonably permanent and which holds out the promise of developing wholesome personalities in both mother and child.

**What of Prevention?**—The preceding discussion should have made it plain why birth out of wedlock is a misfortune in most cases in our present American civilization. It is possible to conceive of a social order in which neither the unmarried mother, nor her child, nor the group, would be unadjusted. But we are not living in that kind of a social system now. Hence it is worth our while to consider means whereby illegitimacy might be reduced. It is also well to distinguish between the prevention of illegitimacy as such, and the prevention of extra-marital sex relations which may or may not result in pregnancy. The birth of children out of wedlock could undoubtedly be reduced to a very small number by the use of contraceptive devices and by measures which bring on miscarriage or abortion. But if it is worth while to go back of illegitimacy, birth control is not only dubious as a preventive; it may even encourage sex irregularities.

This brings us to another question. Suppose it is possible to eliminate all likelihood either of pregnancy or of disease, what harm is there in extra-marital sex relations? This question is not as easily answered as at first appears, and unfortunately we are in no position to study it as carefully as its importance warrants. For the present we shall merely offer some hypotheses to be tested in further investigation. In the first place, our original statement of the question is not quite fair, because it is not always possible to eliminate the likelihood of disease. Second, many persons, especially those of low mentality or poor balance, can not be depended upon to use prophylactic and contraceptive measures. But, coming back to our problem as stated, even if disease and conception could be eliminated, there would still be grounds for urging the limitation of intercourse to the married state. The nature of protective devices used may injure the physical health of the woman, and may interfere with the full gratification of the impulses

of both parties. This in turn may be followed by a feeling of irritation which may lead to a serious emotional disturbance. If the sex relations extend to more than one mate, there may appear such attitudes toward all members of the other sex,—for example, what is popularly called being “foul-minded,”—that the person becomes seriously maladjusted. He may lose his capacity to work well with other people; may lose his social status and with it his own self-respect. When that happens he is truly demoralized.

Now if the prevention of sex irregularities is really to be desired, a program leading to this end is suggested in our enumeration of causal factors. It will include (1) control of the mentally sub-normal and abnormal, (2) provision of wholesome recreation for all, (3) education in matters of sex, (4) social case work with individuals and families who are in danger of any sort of break-down. These are not offered as a panacea; but they are all worth promoting,—not only or chiefly as preventives of sex irregularity, but because they will probably make it easier for all of us to lead well-balanced lives in a reasonable degree of harmony with our fellows.

#### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write out descriptions of actions and statements by persons with whom you associate, which indicate their attitudes toward matters of sex.
2. From your own experience:
  - a. What sex knowledge and practices were current in your grade school?
  - b. In your high school?
3. What conditions have you observed in your home community which might contribute to sex delinquency?
  - a. In theaters, dances, parks, etc.
  - b. In gangs, automobiles, chaperonage
  - c. In conflicting standards of different groups
  - d. In lighting, housing
4. Study the laws of your own state, pertaining to matters of sex, in the light of the resolutions outlined by the New York Conference on Illegitimacy. (See U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 77, pp. 17-19.)
5. Describe, as suggested in preceding chapters, any nearby in-



stitution or other agency which deals with unmarried mothers and their children.

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## CHAPTER IX

### PROSTITUTION

#### TANTINE—A GIRL OF THE STREETS <sup>1</sup>

Tantine was a nineteen year old blonde. In 1911 she had been a prostitute for three years and had been soliciting in Chicago for six months. She lived on Wabash Avenue with a number of other prostitutes. She paid \$4.00 a week for room and bath. Tantine's parents lived in Decatur. She had gone home the summer before and told her parents that she was married and had a "rich husband."

When she was 16 years of age she met a man named Jones, who promised to marry her, and on the strength of this promise seduced her. They then planned to elope. He took her to Cheyenne, Wyoming, and put her in a sporting house.

The rest of the story is told in practically her own words:

"I was a little mutt, then, and I did not know where I was. The landlady just asked my name and how old I was. I told her 16. She said I looked it. You bet I did. I wore my hair in a braid, and it was parted in the center flat on my head. I also wore short skirts. It was a pretty house, and the madame told me to stay up in my room. She asked how I came to know Jones, and I told her he was my husband. I did not see him again until late that night. In a short while the landlady called me down from my room and introduced me to an elderly gentleman, and told me to go up to my room with him. I told her I did not want to go up to my room with anyone but my husband. She said that man was going to give me a whole lot of

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from *The Social Evil in Chicago*, Report of Chicago Vice Commission, pp. 196-198.

money, if I just went up to my room with him. I finally decided to go up with him. He asked me if I wanted some wine. I told him no. Then the landlady called me aside and said, 'Order it anyway, and if you can't drink it, why ditch it.' When we got up to my room, I said, 'Yes, I'll have some wine, and ditch it.' He started to laugh, and called the landlady up and told her what I had said. The landlady laughed and said, 'she is only a little rum, don't mind her.' He then explained to me that 'ditch it' meant to throw it away when he was not looking.

"After talking for a short while, he said it was about time that he made me work. I asked what he meant, and he said, 'I'll show you.' I felt highly insulted and told him so. He then told me where I was, and what I was up against, and I started to cry. He then gave me \$50 and told me to go home to my mother, because he said that was where I belonged.

"I did not see anybody else that day, and late that night Jones came back and told me he was already married and had a child. He said that he was going to Reno to get a divorce and then marry me. At the same time he took the \$50 away from me.

"I was only here one day, because the next day I met a fellow who was going to Laramie, and he asked me to go along. I consented and went with him. I lived with him for nearly a year. He was the second fellow I ever stayed with. Jones actually violated me. He forced me, and I was going to tell my mother only he promised to marry me. No, I did not like him so very much.

"While in Laramie I had a quarrel with my fellow, and left him. I took the train for Denver, because I had heard so much about it. I 'hustled' there for about a week, when I met Dr. Smith, a very prominent physician. He was a married man, and he put me up in a swell hotel and gave me all the money I needed; he only came to see me about three times a week. All went well for about a month until one day I was arrested by the chief of police himself. He took me into his office, and showed me a picture of myself which my father and mother had sent him in order to locate



me. I denied that I was Tantine and said I did not have any parents and that I came from St. Louis. He then asked me to name a few of the principal streets of St. Louis and I was stuck. I told him I could not remember them now, as I was not there very long, as I spent most of my life in Springfield. He asked me about Springfield and I got away with that all right. I told him that that picture could not be of me as I was much older. I did age fearfully after that. I look much older than 19, don't I? He talked to me for about two hours, and I bullied him, and he finally let me go.

"Everything was all right until one day I ran into a fellow from home who also knew Dr. Smith. He promised to take me to Chicago and I decided to go with him. He then wrote to Jones who was in Milwaukee at the time with his wife and child. When we arrived in Chicago my friend put me in a house, on Dearborn Street. About a week later Jones and his wife came to Chicago. He came up to see me and wanted me to live with him. I bawled him out and threatened to turn him over to the police or kill him, if I ever saw him again. The same day his wife came over to see me and she told me that he did the same thing to her. He seduced her and when she had a baby her folks made him marry her. She said he was leading her and the child a dog's life, but she stuck for the child's sake. I believe they are living in Gary now.

"I left that house in about two months, and have been in a lot of houses. I have been in places where they graft, almost hold you up. I have hustled in the street. Yes, I used to pay lots of protection money to policemen. But I got wise in time. If they threaten to pinch me, why I say, go ahead and pinch me, then they won't. No, you can't make any money hustling on the street any more. If you want to be in right you have to give half of what you make to the coppers. No, I never knew any of their names, but I could point them out to you any time. H—, they all graft. There is not a policeman around here that doesn't hold us girls up, and I know it from experience. But you see us girls who have been around a long time

get wise, and they don't get a nickel out of me any more.

"I go home at 3:00 A.M. every morning, and I don't hustle any place any more but here. I think I make more than any of the girls around here, and I don't spend it on booze like the rest of them. That's why they never have anything. I make an average of \$100 a week. That's pretty good, isn't it? Well, come up to the house some afternoon, and see me. No, I don't live with anybody. It don't pay."

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The stories of Tantine and of Ruth Gaines present some significant contrasts. Ruth's extra-marital relations were with only one man and perhaps were limited to a single occasion. She was for a time seriously unadjusted, but never became really demoralized and after a while recovered her lost social status. Tantine's first misstep was perhaps very much like Ruth's. But she did not have the good fortune to fall into the hands of intelligent people who wanted to help her. It may be that the birth of a child would have changed Tantine's attitudes or have provided an occasion for contact with some social agency. On the other hand, had Ruth not become pregnant or had she not been re-established in her neighborhood group, she might have been led on into promiscuity and the commercializing of her favors. A very little thing may have made the difference between the early experience of the two girls, but once that difference appeared they traveled in opposite directions.

Flexner<sup>2</sup> names as the distinguishing characteristics of prostitution, barter, promiscuity and emotional indifference. The barter need not involve the passing of money. Instead there may be gifts or pleasures which serve the same purpose. Promiscuity does not necessarily mean entire lack of choice. It covers the case of women who are faithful to one individual at a time, but are taken up by a succession of men; as well as the lowest grade of "street walkers" who are willing to consort with any man who may come their way. The degree of emotional indif-

<sup>2</sup> Flexner, Abraham, *Prostitution in Europe*, p. 11.



ference may vary considerably, but it can be fairly inferred in most instances from the very facts of barter and promiscuity.

Legal definitions differ greatly, one from another but since the War a number of American states have passed laws which include this clause: "The giving or receiving of the body for sexual intercourse for hire, or the giving or receiving of the body for indiscriminate sexual intercourse without hire."<sup>3</sup> It is of no little interest that these newer conceptions involve both parties to the practice and imply equal guilt.

**Who the Prostitutes Are.**<sup>4</sup>—It has been variously estimated that there are in the United States from 200,000 to 500,000 prostitutes. However, anything like accurate figures are impossible to secure, not only because of the secrecy with which much of this business is conducted, but because there are many classes of prostitutes ranging from apparent respectability to residence in more or less open houses. Before the War there were a great many recognized prostitutes in houses which were known to be used for that purpose. Since 1918, however, there are more who solicit on the streets and use hotels or rooming houses. There are also a great many clandestine and occasional prostitutes who have other occupations or who live at home. There are mistresses of individual men, "charity" girls who grant their favors in return for entertainment, girls who indulge as a lark and various other types. Studies of large numbers of these women indicate that the median age on entering prostitution is eighteen. The great majority are at the time of examination in their early twenties. As to race and nativity there are rather conflicting reports. It appears, however, that while the number of negro prostitutes is rather small it is out of all proportion to the number of negroes in the total population. The native white population furnishes more than its share, while the

<sup>3</sup> Woolston, Howard B., *Prostitution in the United States*, pp. 35-36.

<sup>4</sup> Woolston, Howard B., *Prostitution in the United States*, Vol. I, Chap. II; Miner, Maude E., *Slavery of Prostitution*, Chap. II.

foreign born white appear less frequently. The unfavorable figures with reference to the native white are somewhat clarified when we learn that a disproportionate number of them are the American-born daughters of foreign parents. It appears that about three-fourths of the women are single and that two-thirds have no children. As to physical condition, a very high percentage are found to be infected with syphilis or gonorrhea or both. Various studies have shown from 70 to 100 per cent of the number to be diseased. Mental examinations show from 29 per cent to 85 per cent feeble-minded.<sup>5</sup> Family histories indicate that many of the girls have a poor heredity and that a large number come from broken homes. In many cases there is poverty, neglect and unhappiness. Not a few have left home and are living alone. Occupational studies of street-walkers indicate that they are drawn from department stores, factories, theaters, offices and domestic service. Their earnings before entering prostitution are ordinarily about \$6.00 or \$7.00 a week. After entering prostitution \$30.00 to \$50.00 a week is frequently taken in.

**Patrons and Exploiters.**<sup>6</sup>—About the patrons much less is known and yet enough men make no secret of their associations to enable us to make certain generalizations about them. These men are of all kinds,—young and old, rich and poor, married and single. They range from rough working men to university students—from leading business men to sailors.

The exploiters of the women include procurers, property owners, “madames,” “runners” and liquor dealers. The procurers who are frequently known as “pimps” or “cadets” are men who share the earnings of the women, manage their affairs, protect them, bully them, blackmail their customers and otherwise exercise their power. Property owners do not always realize the purposes for which their houses are used, but in many cases they are very glad to receive the exorbitantly high rentals which are paid. The “madames” are the managers and housekeepers. As

<sup>5</sup> Paddon, Mary, Jour. Del., 3: 1-11, 1918.

<sup>6</sup> Woolston, *op. cit.*, Ch. III.



a rule they are older than the other women and frequently do not engage in prostitution themselves. The "runners" include bell boys, porters, taxi drivers, waiters, barbers, and others who are glad to secure a small commission for directing trade to the women. The liquor dealers are no longer the saloon keepers, but bootleggers. They depend on the prostitutes to promote the sale of bottled goods, while the women count on the liquor to stimulate their business. As a matter of fact, other changes have taken place since the War. With the closing of restricted districts, the "pimps" and "madames" are becoming less numerous, leaving the girls to operate more independently, but there seems to be no marked falling off among the runners and bootleggers.

**Where Prostitution is Practiced.**—The places of business have likewise changed since the anti-vice crusade of 1917-18. The parlor houses and cribs of an earlier day have largely disappeared, but there are still houses of assignation where the women do not live but to which they may be summoned. There are still call-houses which are really employment exchanges for prostitution. Through them appointments may be made to be kept in any place. There is still a great deal of prostitution practiced in tenements, flats, apartments, furnished rooms and hotels. Road houses, excursion boats and taxi-cabs still serve as of old and the same is probably true of massage and manicure parlors.

**Where Soliciting is Done.**—A great deal of soliciting is still done on the streets of our cities, but in order to escape the police it has to be managed a little more cleverly than in days gone by. However, the girls still stroll about singly or in pairs, "window shopping," getting their shoes shined and all the time watching out of the corner of their eye for a possible customer. Often they may be found in cafés and restaurants, especially those with cabarets and dancing for patrons. Even soda fountains are resorted to for "pick ups." Public dance halls and amusement parks are widely frequented as are the movies, vaudeville and burlesque shows. It is not to be imagined that the soliciting

is all done by the women even on the street. In all the places named the initiative is quite as frequently taken by men as by women.

**Causal Factors.**—In undertaking to account for the institution of prostitution we are confronted with even more difficulties than in the study of illegitimacy. We must seek the reasons for the first mis-step, for the continuance in irregular practices and for adoption of prostitution as a regular habit or means of livelihood. There is need for research to determine whether the "first steps" leading to prostitution are different in any significant way from those leading to illegitimacy or from those which have neither outcome. Such data as we have suggest that the beginnings are very much alike in all three cases. Moreover, each step makes the next one easier unless some form of social control intervenes. But we have still to account for the ultimate adoption by some women of prostitution as their established mode of life, and the adoption by some men of the habit of consorting with various women whose favors they purchase in one way or another.

Miss Miner<sup>7</sup> tried to get from 1,000 young women their own ideas of why they had become prostitutes. Of course no one is capable of giving an adequate explanation of his own conduct, but these statements seem to be at least as dependable as any other data to which we have access. Twenty-five per cent assigned the influence of procurers, 21 per cent "conditions at home," 19 per cent amusements and bad companions, 18 per cent "personal reasons," and 17 per cent economic or occupational factors. Of the procurers one-fifth were said to be the girls' own husbands. Among the "conditions at home" were immorality of parents, boarders, and being turned out when pregnant. The "bad companions" were older prostitutes or "wild" young men met in dance halls, at the "movies," etc. Some of the "personal reasons" given were desire for "easy money" or "fine clothes," "love of excitement and good times," indifference to fate after being "ruined," being "desperate and discouraged," "tired of hard work," "pas-

<sup>7</sup> Miner, Maude E., *Slavery of Prostitution*, p. 39.



sionate natures," "could see no harm in it." The leading economic factor was unemployment. Two things are evident from this study of Miss Miner's: first, that the girls' statements are rationalizations and are only clues to the underlying causes; second, that numerous factors enter into the process of becoming a prostitute.

Thomas' study<sup>8</sup> indicates that prostitution is to be regarded as a transitory stage, reached by devious routes and left for various other modes of life. It represents a form of accommodation for many unadjusted girls. Perhaps they have become unstabilized through dwelling upon the contrast between what they have and what they want or what they see others display. Perhaps extra-marital pregnancy and motherhood have deprived them of their sense of personal worth, handicapped them economically and isolated them socially. Whatever the details may be, there is pretty certainly a failure to find satisfaction for some of the impulses and wishes of every "normal" person. Chronic dissatisfaction breeds a certain recklessness or desperation and prostitution is the attempted solution. For a time there may be fairly complete adjustment. But it seems bound to break down sooner or later because of the uncertainty of the business. Erratic enforcement of law, personal jealousies, loss of favorite paramours, venereal disease and disappearance of physical charm are some of the factors which interfere with permanence of the accommodation involved in acceptance of prostitution as a vocation.

Bonger indicates five groups of reasons why men seek the association of prostitutes.<sup>9</sup> First, many young men feel compelled to postpone marriage in order to secure professional training or to accumulate enough money to support a wife "in the style to which she has been accustomed." Meanwhile they seek such gratification as their taste may demand or their means permit. Second, the desire for variety leads men, whether single or married, to seek new consorts. Third, coldness on the part of the

<sup>8</sup> Thomas, W. I., *The Unadjusted Girl*, p. 120.

<sup>9</sup> Bonger, W. A., *Criminality and Economic Conditions*.

wife leads men to seek gratification elsewhere. Fourth, desire to escape the monotony of everyday life leads men to seek gay and irresponsible companionship in their leisure hours. Fifth, those men with exaggerated or perverted sex appetites are unlikely to find satisfaction of their extravagant desires except among professional prostitutes. Again we note that prostitution is an effort to find satisfactions for wishes and desires that are largely "natural" and "legitimate," but seemingly out of reach except in this way. The inadequacy of this attempted solution frequently involves its expensiveness, disease, social disapproval and the consequent fear of exposure.

**Syphilis and Gonorrhea.**—Among the effects of prostitution the one most talked about is the spread of "venereal" diseases. The findings of numerous investigators indicate that from 60 to 75 per cent of all prostitutes have syphilis or gonorrhea or both.<sup>10</sup> Hence, while infection is by no means the universal consequence of illicit intercourse, it is very likely to occur. The large number of patients suffering from these diseases indicates that infection does occur very frequently. In the year ending June 30, 1920, there were 14,000 cases reported in the army, 21,000 in the navy and 326,000 civilian cases reported to state boards of health.<sup>11</sup> It has been estimated that the total number of cases in the United States is about 8,500,000.<sup>12</sup> Perhaps this estimate is high; but there is no denying the wide reaches of these diseases. Other data strengthen the belief that venereal infection is a very common result of prostitution.<sup>13</sup> Over 90 per cent of the infections reported to several clinics were attributed to illicit intercourse. This is truly a serious matter, for gonorrhea is not "just like a cold" nor is syphilis quickly cured by quack doctors. Both diseases require persistent treatment at an early stage. Syphilis, in particular, has far-reaching consequences which may include miscarriage, sterility, infant mortality, paresis and other nervous and mental diseases.

<sup>10</sup> Woolston, *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55.

<sup>11</sup> Storey, T. A., in *Jour. Soc. Hyg.*, 7: 59, 1921.

<sup>12</sup> Marcus, Lawrence, in *Jour. Soc. Hyg.*, 7: 441-456, 1921.

<sup>13</sup> Woolston, *op. cit.*, p. 188.



**Social Consequences of Prostitution.**—The results of syphilis and gonorrhea are not merely physical. They involve frequently shame and a loss of self-respect which is the beginning of personal demoralization. The knowledge that a husband or wife has syphilis changes the atmosphere of the home. Loss of confidence, worry, quarreling and divorce may follow. But even without acquiring one of these diseases there is apt to be personal and family disorganization. The woman loses her social status outside the "underworld"; she is cut off from affection unless it be in relation to her "pimp"; security is gone; and presently the novelty disappears into a sordid monotony. "Riotous sex-indulgence, the loss of shame, alcohol, irregular hours, disease, combine to bring about speedy and far-reaching demoralization. Moral idiocy, covetousness, aversion to work, vanity, inclination to steal, libidinousness, may be acquired as well as native traits; they may be qualities exaggerated, even if not altogether bred in the course of the career."<sup>14</sup> In men who frequent the houses of prostitution there is a growing spirit of disloyalty to their families, fear lest they be discovered, loss of self-control; or it may be brazen flaunting of the folkways, reckless defiance of disease, exaggerated sex impulses. They may become "corrupters of the youth" and a potential menace to every good-looking girl. They perpetuate a "double standard" of morals; they reduce barber shop conversation to the telling of vulgar tales. There was a time when prostitution was considered a "protection of virtue." But the evidence is against that ancient myth.

Prostitution, therefore, seems intimately bound up with personal and social disorganization. It frequently grows out of instability and ends in demoralization. However, it is conceivable that for some women prostitution is a means of getting through a crisis; that frankly accepted as a temporary accommodation, it is a stepping stone toward recovery of security, affection and social status. Perhaps it would function thus for a larger number were it

<sup>14</sup> Flexner, *op. cit.*, p. 70.

not for the hazards of disease, legal condemnation and social isolation.

**Regulation.**—From time immemorial attempts have been made to regulate this age-old institution. Quite generally an effort has been made to segregate houses of prostitution within a limited district of a city, the theory being that if they were allowed in certain quarters the evil would be concentrated and more easily controlled, while other portions of the city would be free from vice. Registration of prostitutes is another device which has been resorted to, especially in Europe. In many cities, both American and European, the police departments have formulated rules governing the conduct of the women and the management of their houses. These rules have to do with lighting, music, costumes, going on the street, appearing at the doors and windows, etc. From time to time the police have been in the habit of making raids. These were spectacular events frequently staged in order to bring recalcitrant resorts to time and to give “good” citizens an impression of vigorous activity on the part of the police. In larger cities there have been vice squads and morals bureaus whose duties were to become acquainted with places and persons suspected of being connected with prostitution, to observe their activities and recommend or take appropriate action.

Up to the time of the late War there was a bewildering confusion in the legislation affecting sex vice. Even yet the laws are not altogether clear nor uniformly enforced, but open prostitution is supposed to be forbidden everywhere in the United States. Regulation has been given up, in theory at least, but prostitution has by no means been eliminated. There are even yet sharp differences of opinion among serious-minded people concerning the relative practicability of regulation and suppression. Flexner, after an extended study of prostitution in Europe, decided that registration reached only a fraction of the women, that medical examinations were ineffective and that segregation did not segregate. He concluded his statement with these words: “This then is the final and weightiest objection to regulation; not that it fails as hygiene, not that



it is contemptible as espionage, not that it is unnecessary as a police measure, but that it obstructs and confounds the proper attitude of society towards all social evils, of which prostitution is one.”<sup>15</sup>

Other students of the problem have arrived at very different conclusions.<sup>16</sup> Their judgment is that the whole matter should be regarded as an open question. They are convinced that regulation is by no means the complete failure that Flexner claims. But they point out that it is impossible to settle the issue until we drop our conventional moral sentiments and assume an objective, scientific attitude toward the problem.

**Social Treatment** of prostitutes may be divided into three parts: legal, medical, and personal. Most commonly in the past it is only the legal phase which has received attention. A woman was arrested, taken to jail by a policeman, tried in a magistrate's court on the charge of vagrancy and fined \$50.00, or sent to jail for thirty days. In jail she spent her time in idleness, sometimes not even being in charge of a matron, and at the end of her sentence went out to ply her “trade” once more. If she paid a fine, she looked upon this as a sort of license fee. Today in a growing number of cities there is a division of the municipal court known as a Morals Court or Women's Court where cases involving sex delinquency are heard, sometimes by a woman judge or referee, and only after investigation by a police-woman or woman probation officer. Pending her court hearing the arrested woman is held in a detention home instead of in the ordinary jail; and instead of the former fine or short jail sentence, she may be placed on probation or sent to a special type of institution where she is to receive physical up-building, industrial training and a type of discipline calculated to restore her to wholesome citizenship. After leaving the institution she is not immediately discharged but goes out on parole, having guidance

<sup>15</sup> Flexner, *op. cit.*, p. 284.

<sup>16</sup> A summary of these conclusions may be found in the following review of seven recent books. Barnes, Harry E., and Waterman, W. C., *A Scientific View of Sex Problems*, Jour. Soc. Forces, 3: 149-154.

and supervision until she has demonstrated the ability to make her way alone once more.

In a large number of states the laws now require the registration of all persons suffering from syphilis and gonorrhea. The purpose of this registration is to enable departments of health not only to assemble statistics, but also to see that appropriate treatment is received by the patients. To this end there are maintained numerous clinics in connection with dispensaries and hospitals, and sometimes independent of these. It has, however, been very difficult to get physicians to report their cases and no less difficult to induce patients to persevere in the treatment until their disease is arrested. In many cases, confinement in a correctional institution is the only way to secure enough control over the diseased person to insure effective medical treatment.

The personal treatment, which is beginning to be given along with the legal and medical, had its origin in private institutions and case-work agencies such as we have described in the preceding chapter. These presented—and still present—the greatest possible divergence in effectiveness. Some of them offer little but sentimentality and pious exhortation. Others attempt the analysis and remaking of personality through a coordination of psychiatric, medical and social-work techniques. The workers realize that they are dealing with a woman cut off from ordinary social contacts, sometimes bitter in her isolation, sometimes making a game of her relations to organized society. They appreciate the facts that repression may have made her self-centered, that she may be seeking refuge from unhappy memories and that solution of her problems demands a reorganization of her attitudes. They undertake to reveal her to herself, to establish new and wholesome contacts, to develop new interests and activities. Above all, they do not threaten or condemn or scold. They seek to understand and to help the woman reshape her scheme of life. They are not in the position of reformers or uplifters, but of professional folk offering their skilled services to women who want assistance in making personal adjustments.



**What of the Future?**—There has been a good deal of speculation, on the whole without supporting evidence, as to the desirability and the prospects of eliminating prostitution. It is assumed, on the one hand, that prostitution is so bound up with human nature—which is supposed to be unchangeable—that it will always be found in human society. Therefore, it is quite futile to attempt its eradication. On the whole, the most sensible thing is to accept the institution of prostitution as a part of the social order and, while regulating it, make it respectable. This is the philosophy not merely of *roués*, but of *men* whose conduct is above suspicion.

Over against this position, which may be termed a species of fatalism, is an attitude of utopian optimism. It is held that prostitution is not only wicked, but it can be eliminated by some relatively simple formula. The human impulses involved can easily be brought under control by an act of will. By passing abatement and injunction laws, by establishing rescue homes and by preaching the virtues of continence the social order can presently be purged of this vice.

We are more and more convinced that both these positions are unsound and that the attitudes which go with them are obstacles to any understanding of the issues at stake. We are interested in the advancement of dispassionate, objective studies of prostitution, whence it comes and whither it tends. This means the cultivation of a scientific spirit and its application to these problems which are now enveloped in a haze of moral taboos. It is in this spirit that we come to an examination of some reform movements, the forces behind them and the direction in which they appear to be going.

Since the closing of segregated districts throughout the United States in 1918, there seems to be a tendency toward the reduction of prostitution. This movement was stimulated by vice investigations of the decade preceding and brought to a head by efforts of the War Department to make men "fit to fight." The methods employed varied, but they commonly involved one type of new legislation.

To facilitate the closing of disorderly resorts a number of states passed what are known as injunction and abatement laws. These laws commonly declare disorderly houses to be public nuisances and those who occupy, conduct or own them to be guilty of maintaining a nuisance. Proceedings may be instituted either by public officials or individual citizens for their abatement and to enjoin the persons guilty of maintaining them. At the trial the general reputation of the place is made admissible as evidence. Upon proof of the existence of the nuisance a permanent injunction is issued, the personal property used in conducting the business is ordered sold, and the premises are closed unless a bond is given to insure proper use of the property in the future.

Somewhat earlier there was a movement to suppress the so-called "white slave traffic." Two outstanding steps in this direction were the treaty between sixteen different nations to which the United States became an adherent in 1905, and the Mann Act of 1910, which forbade the transportation of women for immoral purposes in interstate or foreign commerce.

Among the private agencies which have been active in the field of prevention are girls' protective leagues, travelers' aid societies, law enforcement leagues and social hygiene associations. The girls' protective leagues undertake to protect girls from certain contacts, improve their economic conditions and secure wholesome recreation. The travelers' aid societies have been a great stumbling block in the path of the procurers. The law enforcement leagues have collected evidence, initiated proceedings, upheld the arms of honest officials and turned the search-light of publicity upon the dishonest. The social hygiene associations have conducted research and carried on educational work not only with reference to prostitution, but concerning sex matters and personal hygiene in general.



## PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write abstracts of the laws of your state which relate to prostitution.
2. Discover the professed attitudes of local officials concerning prostitution, especially in relation to street-walkers, taxis, rooming houses, hotels. To what extent do these expressed attitudes appear to be genuine?
3. Secure statistics from your city or state health department concerning the incidence of syphilis and gonorrhea.
4. Visit a dispensary or hospital which treats patients for syphilis and gonorrhea. Report on:
  - a. Number and proportion of these cases
  - b. Admission of patients
  - c. Length of treatment
  - d. Results of treatment
  - e. Follow-up work
  - f. Equipment
  - g. Personnel: Medical, nursing, social
5. Visit a police station, jail or detention home and report on:
  - a. Plant and equipment
  - b. Staff: especially women
  - c. Receiving and examination of women prisoners
  - d. Records: tabulate data concerning sex offenders
6. Visit and make a similar report on a woman's reformatory or industrial school. Note also:
  - a. Educational facilities and measures
  - b. Employment
  - c. Disciplinary measures
  - d. Parole system
7. Visit and make a similar report on a rescue home or mission.

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## CHAPTER X

### HOMELESS MEN

In the two chapters just preceding we studied two types of women whose unadjustment involves social isolation. The unmarried mother and the prostitute are usually detached from their families and excluded from most other social groups. The solution of their problems includes either the re-establishment of old relationships or participation in new groups. In this chapter we shall examine the situation of unadjusted men who are similarly isolated. In the summaries which follow it will be noted that Burke had broken with his family, but maintained rather wholesome relationships with other people. He played a useful rôle in the economic system and was fairly well satisfied with it. In other words, he had adjusted himself to the status of a seasonal laborer. Norman and Richards, on the contrary, had apparently broken with everybody. They had "burned their bridges behind them" and declared war on organized society. Their only social contacts were on the basis of hostility. Yet they seemed to "get away with it." Hence, while they were an undoubted nuisance, it is difficult to know how to classify their degree of adjustment. Jamison was a broken-down, old man, restless and dissatisfied, cut off from most social contacts by his blindness, his mental disorder and his wandering. He was completely demoralized.

#### BURKE—A SEASONAL LABORER<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Burke, a tall, husky chap of perhaps thirty-five years is living at the Men's Hotel during the winter and "mak-

<sup>1</sup> Notes from a personal interview.

ing" the wheat harvest every summer. He was born in northern Ireland near Belfast, being brought by his parents to America at the age of five. He lived with them in an eastern city until he was eighteen, since which time he has been a migratory laborer in many parts of the country. During the War he was employed at Hog Island, Mussel Shoals, Camp Custer and other places. He was put in class "D" by the Draft Board because of a bad foot. He worked in an oil refinery in Indiana and was a fireman on various boats on the Great Lakes for several seasons.

For the past seven years he has been "making" the wheat harvest in Kansas and nearby states. He earns from \$3.50 to \$10.00 a day, but says that he is extremely fortunate if he is able to work fifty days in a season. He has ridden the freights, but says he now pays his fare to avoid being picked up by the police or beaten up by the I. W. W. Last season he went with four others in a Ford owned by one of the men, he paying his share of the cost of oil, gasoline, etc. One season he returned to the city with \$300, but usually he brings in considerably less. He rarely finds winter work, partly because the jobs are scarcer and partly because there are many more men in town during the cold weather. He has had opportunities to stay on a farm in North Dakota during the winter, but felt that the low wages offered and the cold weather would not justify his remaining. Sometimes after wheat harvest he works in the potato fields of the Dakotas or Colorado. Only twice has he had difficulty in collecting his wages. Usually, he says, the farmers or threshers pay him promptly and in full. While in harvest he gets plenty of good food, but has to sleep in barns or hay stacks. He saves his money and uses it to carry him through the winter.

Mr. Burke is evidently intelligent, though relatively uneducated; he is alert and good-natured. He talks quite freely of his experiences and all in all seems to represent the best type of migratory, unskilled laborer.



NORMAN AND RICHARDS—"FAKE" VETERANS <sup>2</sup>

The following excerpts will illustrate some of the ways in which the Red Cross since the War has been trying to deal with transient ex-service men, real and alleged. The first excerpt is from a News Letter sent out by a Red Cross Division Headquarters. This part of the News Letter is headed "Missing Men. Do you know these men? If not, will you be on the look-out for them and get in touch with the division office at once if they come to your attention."

"Norman, Arthur J.—Claims enlistment in Canadian Service. Department of National Defense, Ottawa, Canada, unable to identify him as having served with Canadian forces. Traveling with companion, Martin R. Richards, has appealed to several Red Cross chapters for assistance, giving fictitious names and addresses as reference. Boston reports chronic wanderer. Men in S——, Illinois, October, 1923. Norman is of medium build, blue eyes, brown hair. Richards was dressed in dark blue suit, is tall and thin, has brown hair and blue eyes. Are traveling on motor-cycle. Suggest no financial assistance be given. Endeavor to learn legal residence."

The second excerpt is from a weekly report sent by each active Red Cross chapter in a western state to all the other active chapters in that state.

"Norman, Arthur J.—Claims to be an ex-service man, Canadian Army two years. Shrapnel wounded, but not disabled. No claim for compensation. Handsome, dark brown hair, blue grey eyes, prominent chin with deep dimple, mobile lips, faultless English, Boston accent. Claims one year in medicine at Harvard. On stage fifteen months with Canadian dumbbells. Now setting fancy Mosaic work in the employ of E. B. Charles of D——, working with Martin R. Richards. Norman and Richards finished a job in L—— and started to S—— where Mr. Charles was to meet them and put them to work. Speeding on a motorcycle near B—— they ran into a Ford coupé,

<sup>2</sup> Excerpts from a Red Cross case record.

were arrested and fined \$54, all that they had with them. They admitted that it was their fault. They did not want to discredit their employer by letting anybody know that they were arrested and broke. Norman supports his aunt and small sister in X——, Mass. Norman sent a telegram to his aunt through the Red Cross. He took a long time to write the telegram because he had never lied to his aunt, and wanted to tell the truth without telling her of the accident and his distress. He had done boys' work in the Y. M. C. A. in Boston and the "Y" let him have a room for two days. Mr. Charles will undoubtedly be in town by Monday. Norman gave the impression that he was without food and would absolutely accept nothing, preferring to go without until the telegram was answered. The following day the men stayed at the Y. M. C. A., and disappeared that night. The following day the telegram was returned undelivered. One-half dozen robberies took place the following night and these men were suspected but not located. After leaving the Red Cross they went to a minister here and worked the same confidence game with him, receiving supper, although meals had been given them by the Red Cross."

The third excerpt is from a letter written by the Secretary of another Red Cross Chapter to the Division Headquarters. It is dated a few days later than the second.

"Rev. Enwright, our Methodist minister, reported that the two men called at his home about the middle of the afternoon last Sunday. They told about the same story to him that they told to Miss K—— (writer of the second excerpt); said they were traveling on a motorcycle, and had had bad luck by bumping into a Ford coupé. Rev. Enwright gave them a good meal and \$1.50 with which to secure a room. He later learned that they went from his house to the Baptist minister where they said they were hungry and had no money. They secured money from him also."



JAMISON—A HOMELESS OLD MAN <sup>3</sup>

In November, 1922, Mrs. Bennett came to the office of the Red Cross in a small middle-western town to ask aid for a blind man, 63 years old, who was living with her family. She said that Mr. Jamison had come to this town (we shall call it Smithville) in June, and had been living with them most of the time since then. The way it came about was this. Mr. and Mrs. Bennett had been working during the threshing season for Mr. Jamison's nephew. Mr. Jamison who was staying there, having recently come from "somewhere in Missouri," had a special kind of ironing-board on which he claimed to have a patent. He made the Bennetts the proposition that they might manufacture the ironing-boards in return for giving him a home and paying a royalty on each board sold. They agreed to this, but no written contract was made. Meanwhile the Bennetts had found Mr. Jamison very difficult to get along with. Moreover, they were not able to undertake the manufacture of ironing-boards. Mr. Jamison talked about notes which were due him, so they asked for money to pay for his board; but none was ever forthcoming. The Bennetts were people of very limited means and felt that they could not keep Mr. Jamison any longer, although they were very sorry for him.

The Red Cross Secretary visited Mr. Jamison at the Bennett home. Mr. Jamison was highly indignant at having been "reported" and refused to give any information. However, the Secretary learned in various ways something about Mr. Jamison's past. It seems that he had previously been a rather successful mechanic. But within the past twelve years three misfortunes had overtaken him. His wife had died; he had lost his sight; and his mind had been so disturbed that he had to be committed to a State Hospital for mental diseases. After eight months he was allowed to go to his daughter's home, where he remained for six months. At that time he took all the money he had

<sup>3</sup> Summary of a Red Cross case record.

from the bank and left "for parts unknown." His daughter did not hear from him for some time. Then he wired for more money, which she sent. He returned and spent another six months with his daughter. Then he left again, wandering over four or five states.

However, before this information could be assembled, the County Commissioners had taken matters into their hands and bought Mr. Jamison a ticket to the capital city of an adjoining state. They did this with no other information than a vague report that the old man had a daughter there. Not finding his daughter, Mr. Jamison applied to the Family Welfare Society for aid. This Society communicated with the Red Cross in Smithville, but again before any definite information could be assembled the man had gone on. So he wandered about for a year. The social agencies of various cities were communicated with in the effort to locate him and to make a plan for his care. The last word received was that Mr. Jamison had been found and that his daughter was arranging for his return to the State Hospital.

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**Types of Homeless Men.**—Different students of the problems of homeless men classify them according to varied categories. Irwin St. John Tucker<sup>4</sup> divides them into three groups—hoboes, tramps and "bums." "A hobo is a migratory worker. A tramp is a migratory non-worker. A 'bum' is a stationary non-worker." Somewhat more adequate than this is Anderson's classification into seasonal laborers, migratory casual laborers, migratory non-workers, non-migratory casual laborers and "bums."<sup>5</sup>

The story of Burke is a fair sample of the experience of seasonal laborers who work in the harvest fields, orchards and lumber camps. Some of these men, like Burke, are conservative in their spending and usually manage to save enough during the months they are employed to tide them over the winter period, but there are many others who do

<sup>4</sup> *World Tomorrow*, 6: 262, 1923.

<sup>5</sup> Anderson, Nels, *The Hobo*, p. 265.



not earn enough, who spend too freely or who experience some misfortune which throws them upon others for support during a part of the year. We have no means of knowing precisely the number of seasonal laborers in the United States, but together with the other migratory workers they probably number from one to three million.

The migratory casual laborers are usually known as hoboos. They are found in construction camps, section gangs, and more or less in the harvest fields and lumber camps. A study made of migratory casual laborers in California in 1913-14 shed interesting light on this little understood group of men.<sup>6</sup> About one-half of the men were native Americans under thirty years of age. Three-fourths were unmarried and almost as many were without any trade training. Very few had been long enough in one place to establish a legal residence. Two-thirds admitted that they had no intention of finding steady work. Three-fifths had been casual laborers for at least six years. Contrary to popular impression, only 8 per cent were found to be members of the I. W. W., while nearly half of them were or had been members of a church. Two-fifths had ceased maintaining any connection with relatives and five-sixths said that no one was dependent upon them. Three-fourths were found to be alcoholic and one-fourth of those tested were reported to be feeble-minded.

Norman and Richards are samples of a modern kind of tramp who differs in his mode of transportation and in his technique of begging from the tramp of pre-war days who rode brakebeams and knocked at back doors for "hand-outs." These migratory non-workers probably furnish a good many of the mental and physical defectives who are usually charged against the hobo group. But whatever else may be true of them, they are purposeless wanderers who beat their way from place to place, begging for food, getting along in any way they can and carefully avoiding rendering any useful service to the world. Some of them wander continuously, others only at particular times or

<sup>6</sup> Parker, Carlton, *The Casual Laborer*, pp. 70-74.

seasons and still others at irregular intervals broken by periods of quite "normal" living.

Another group of homeless men, sometimes known as the "home guard," consists of non-migratory casual laborers. They work irregularly at various kinds of unskilled day labor and odd jobs. Sometimes they have never been "on the road" at all, sometimes they are older men who have "settled down" after a migratory career as hoboes or tramps. Mrs. Solenberger<sup>7</sup> tells of an arrangement made with the managers of a certain foundry in Chicago to give employment to homeless men sent to them by the United Charities. The pay was to be \$1.50 a day and a plan was worked out whereby room and board in the neighborhood of the foundry could be secured without advance payment. Only those men were sent who claimed to want steady work and who seemed to be able-bodied. Much to the disappointment of the United Charities, only a small percentage of those sent to the foundry ever went at all and of those who went very few stayed more than a week. Like the rest of the "home guard" they seemed to be men without the energy to roam and without the personal balance and stability to get on well with other people.

The "bums" are the lowest of all the types of homeless men. They include alcoholics, drug addicts, old, helpless and unemployable men, the most pitiable and most repulsive of all the "down and outs." They are stationary non-workers who gravitate between the cheap lodging house and jail, living on the charity of their fellow men. The beggars and petty thieves among the "bums" and the "home guard" are the most conspicuous, but the least numerous of the homeless men. Anderson estimates for example<sup>8</sup> that they do not exceed 2,500 in Chicago, while the total number of the "home guard" type is about 30,000. The tramps who pass through the city probably run to 150,000 a year, while the hoboes and seasonal laborers reach a total of 300,000 a year. This means that there are in Chicago at any one time from forty to fifty thousand home-

<sup>7</sup> Solenberger, Alice W., *One Thousand Homeless Men*, p. 151.

<sup>8</sup> Anderson, *op. cit.*, p. 106.



less men, and that in the course of a year the city's hospitality is enjoyed by not far from 500,000. Chicago is the great center for homeless men in the United States, but there also are large numbers who make Kansas City and Minneapolis their base of operations.

**Economic Factors.**—As in the study of other sorts of unadjusted people, an analysis and classification of causal factors is exceedingly difficult. In this instance we shall divide them for convenience into economic factors, personal factors and unmet crises. The economic factors have already been suggested in our brief discussion of the seasonal and casual laborers. Unattached men are demanded to build bridges, tunnels, railroads and irrigation systems, to cut timber and harvest the crops. They go here and there to rough, uncomfortable parts of the country, breaking the way for others after the fashion of pioneers. They also constitute a part of our "labor reserve." It is they who are first discharged when business is slack and the last to be re-employed. This is partly because they are among the less efficient and partly because they are known to be without dependents. Thus their existence affords a certain fluidity to the labor supply. Their lack of funds and of organization makes it difficult for them to protest against the hard conditions of labor which seem to fall to their lot. Hence, while they are not docile, they are inarticulate and accept hours, wages, food, living quarters and employers' attitudes which more skilled, better paid and organized workers would fight against. But the significant thing is that a large amount of our construction and agricultural work is so planned as to require the existence of a large body of unattached migratory laborers. In a very real sense they are the product of a badly organized economic system.

**Personal Factors.**—But it is not enough to attribute the existence of homeless men to our economic life. Even though we know that the disorganization of the labor market requires a large and floating reserve, we have still to discover why certain men rather than others are a part of this reserve. The answer is to be found to a considerable

degree in personal factors. Thus a number of studies indicate that a good many homeless men are mental defectives. It is not difficult to understand how they might fail to fit into the usual regime of industry, but drift into the ranks of the casual laborer and on down until they are among the "bums." But we must not overlook the fact that many of these homeless men are of superior ability and that their intelligence seems to average no lower than that of the men tested in army camps.<sup>9</sup> More important than feeble-mindedness are the mental diseases and various personality disorders manifested by many homeless men. These include degenerates with eccentricities (constitutional inferiors), epileptics, hysterical types, neurasthenics, persecuted and mystical types, those who regard themselves as apostles and prophets (paranoiacs) and those suffering from dementia praecox, or drifting into senility.<sup>10</sup> Speaking in more general terms, these men might be termed weaklings who, having no great strength of character, lose their grip on things under the stress of some temporary misfortune. Then having found how easy it is to live without regular work they lose what little ambition they may have had and drift into the ranks of the unemployed and unemployable.

A special type of personality defect found very commonly among homeless men is the exaggerated wish for new experience, a strong spirit of restlessness, sometimes referred to as *Wanderlust*. Cases of this range all the way from young boys anxious to go West where they can become cowboys, fight Indians, etc., to older men who haunt the offices of social agencies asking to be sent on to some place or other. Mrs. Solenberger<sup>11</sup> tells the story of a young deaf mute who came to the United Charities in Chicago asking for transportation to St. Paul. Because he knew no one in that city and would have no means of support upon his arrival, his request was refused. Instantly he shifted his ground and asked for a ticket to a city in central

<sup>9</sup> Anderson, *op. cit.*, pp. 72-73.

<sup>10</sup> Healy, Wm., *The Individual Delinquent*, p. 778.

<sup>11</sup> Solenberger, *op. cit.*, p. 218.



Illinois, then to Iowa, then to "anywhere out West." It was learned that he had been in Chicago less than three hours, but he was impatient of questions and wrote on a piece of paper, "I must go on. I can not stay. I have nothing to do, so I travel always. I do not stay anywhere." Another manifestation of the abnormal wish for new experience is displayed by the street beggars. There is a constant change of scene, a never-ending game of "hide and seek" with the police, an ever-present possibility of a large gratuity and eternal speculation as to what the next contributor will offer. There is little doubt that to those who beg on the street this spirit of adventure is quite as important as the money they receive from ill-advised givers.

Finally there are various physical conditions which combine with other factors to turn men into casual laborers, tramps, beggars and "bums." Some have suffered accident or disease such that they are unable to secure or retain regular jobs. Some are so addicted to the use of alcohol or other drugs that they are unfitted for regular employment. Some are simply the victims of old age and an industrial system which crowds them out without making any provision for their declining years. Some of these men who are broken in health never received sufficient wages to make savings possible, lacked business sense, or lost their savings through bank failures or other business reverses.

**Unmet Crises.**—As we have enumerated the various personal factors which enter into the detachment of men from ordinary economic and social life, it must have been apparent that not a few of these were quite as truly effects as causes of this social isolation and its frequently concomitant demoralization. This becomes increasingly evident when we note the personal crises of men, which seem to have been the turning points in their lives. Not infrequently they ran away from home as boys because of difficulties with parents or older brothers. Some quarreled with their wives and then deserted. The loneliness which followed the death of a wife has sometimes been the occasion of "going on the road." Sometimes there have been

embarrassing situations, entanglements with women or other scandals, which made it easier to leave home than to stay behind and face the criticism or sympathy of neighbors. Sometimes the migratory career began when a man fled from the consequences of a criminal act. Since the War a great many ex-service men have found it difficult to fit themselves once more into the peace-time social organization. Perhaps when they returned from France they found their jobs filled by others. If they had work, they may have been eliminated by the business depression of 1920-21. Ofttimes their health was impaired, not merely by exposure to the elements, wounds or gas, but by the terrific strain of camp and battlefield. Many, having lost the habit of concentrated application and self-directed effort, have been demoralized by the demands made on their behalf by veterans' organizations which have led them to feel that the country owes them a living. Hence there are a great many ex-service men among the groups which we are discussing.

Sometimes the failure is more obviously that of society and its organized agencies rather than of the men themselves. Wherever licenses are granted to the crippled and blind to sell lead pencils and shoestrings as a cover for begging, society is directly encouraging men, who might have been put on their feet, to become permanently dependent. Whenever the police arrest a hobo for vagrancy and the court sentences him to ten days in jail or orders him to leave town in two hours, a man who might continue or become a useful workman may be driven into the ranks of the unemployable. Whenever an organization provides transportation to some other community without due inquiry, it is probably encouraging an already overdeveloped spirit of restlessness. When almshouse doors are open to hoboes and tramps to come and go as they wish, society is making another contribution to irresponsibility and unrest. Whenever a religious mission offers "soup, flop and salvation" without inquiring into the specific needs of homeless men, it is directly encouraging hypocrisy and demonstrating another easy way to live without working. Whenever an



orphanage makes the life of boys so mechanical that they can not develop a spirit of independence or habits of initiative, it is preparing them to go with the crowd, to seek the easiest way out of difficulties later in life, and to run away from their troubles instead of facing them squarely. Whenever a citizen drops a quarter in a beggar's cup, buys a pencil and says, "keep the change," serves a meal from the back door or offers a cast-off coat to an unknown man, he is helping to perpetuate a demoralizing social situation.

"**Hobohemia**" is the term applied by Anderson to that part of the city which is frequented by the thousands of unattached men of various sorts. In Kansas City and Chicago at least this is a distinct and rather clearly marked area near the business section. It is filled with cheap lodging houses, crude lunch counters where service is rough and ready, second-hand clothing stores, employment agencies and missions. On the edge of the district are pawnshops, barber "colleges," soft drink stands, "blind pigs," cheap movies and burlesque shows. The institutions within "Hobohemia" serve the homeless men almost exclusively, providing them with food and clothing and places to sleep and loaf. Those on the borders of "Hobohemia" depend partly upon the trade of the more permanent population, but cater also the needs of the homeless. Here it is possible to see a very poor moving picture or burlesque show for ten cents, to get a shave or haircut for ten or fifteen cents, to buy a complete outfit of clothing for a very few dollars, secure a meal for fifteen to twenty cents and a night's lodging for ten to fifty cents. Standards of living are low in "Hobohemia." Lodging houses and restaurants are dark, dirty and unventilated. The quality of food and of clothing is poor and amusements are of the lowest imaginable type.

**Making a Living.**—Means of "getting by" vary greatly with the different types of homeless men. The hoboes work at odd jobs. They are dish washers, waiters, potato peelers, porters, janitors, while in the city; lumber jacks, teamsters, harvest hands while away. The "home guard" depends a

good deal upon begging, either openly or under the guise of peddling pencils and shoestrings. Sometimes they sell cuff links, collar buttons, cheap rings, eye glasses or watches, "putting on a stunt" or making a speech to draw a crowd. Some of them pretend to be sick, crippled, blind or deaf and dumb. Others make soapbox orations and sell papers or books on the labor movement or pass the hat for their own benefit. Some of them exploit children, usually boys, but occasionally girls, having the youngster sing or "speak a piece" in order to make a sentimental appeal. There seem to be a limited number of "black sheep" from good families who are regularly paid by their relatives to stay away from home. A considerable number exploit their membership in fraternal organizations or labor unions, appeal to the clergy with a "hard luck" tale, wear parts of a military uniform or an American Legion button in order to gain sympathy. Some make a specialty of "working" the charities. They borrow and beg from each other, being always eager to attach themselves to a friend who has just arrived with money. They beg openly on the street or shamefacedly at back doors. They break into box cars, stores and orchards, steal milk from the doorstep or pie from the pantry window. They rob each other, taking particular advantage of the man who is asleep or drunk. When the weather is mild, they sleep in parks, vacant houses, box cars or in the open. In the winter they make use of railroad depots, doorways, mission floors, pool rooms and police stations. They crowd into the missions, especially, where they may sit for hours in a stupor between sleeping and waking. If their clothes are not too rough, they may succeed in loafing in the lobbies of a cheap hotel or in a public library. When worst comes to worst, they walk the streets at night and find a place to doze through the day.

**Personal Demoralization.**—The downward steps in the demoralization of a homeless man are apt to be somewhat as follows: inability to find regular work or perhaps an extended period of unemployment, traveling in search of



a job, after a time traveling without working much, then wandering without working at all except as a last resort, ultimately perhaps settling down in some city to live by begging. In other words, there is always the possibility that the regular workman may become a hobo, the hobo a tramp and the tramp a "bum."

Living from hand to mouth as they do, few homeless men have not been at least temporarily dependent. The low wages, the unskilled nature of the work and its growing irregularity unsettle habits of industry and at last make the men unwilling to accept steady employment. The conditions under which they live and work on ranches, in the woods and in construction camps also contribute their share toward the breakdown of self-respect and personal pride. The overcrowding, lack of privacy and absence of nearly all facilities for decent living in so many lumber camps can not help exercising a demoralizing influence. Their work is hard, the hours are long and the bosses order them about like so many cattle. They drift off the job without worrying about the effect of this on the employer; they feel little interest in the quality of work done and are ever ready to make trouble. There is a decay of thrift and industry, a growth of unreliability and a spirit of hostility to organized society.

During the long periods of idleness, especially in winter, the homeless men again live under wretched physical conditions. Even though they themselves may still be honest migratory laborers, they are thrown into intimate contact with tramps, beggars and impostors. The public sentiment of "Hobohemia" seems to favor drink, gambling, licentiousness and other forms of vice. After weeks of idleness, dissipation and privation, the men are so run down physically that they feel unequal to continuous hard labor and do not seek it. If they work at odd jobs they lose caste both with the more successful group of laborers and with the true vagrants. The skilled workmen look down upon them because of the menial tasks they accept and the tramps despise them for working at all. Another demoralizing

aspect of the odd jobs lies in the fact that some charitable but ill advised householders pay more than the work is worth and frequently offer a meal besides.

Being a social outcast and debarred from family life, the homeless man frequently hungers for intimate associations and affection. The women he knows are usually repulsive. Attractive women are separated from him by an infinite gulf. Hence, a not infrequent result is the development of sexual perversion. Being without property, he lacks the incentive of ownership and fixed residence to remain faithful to any institution. He is not even loyal to the I. W. W.; he solves his problems by running away from them. The homeless man, whether hobo or tramp, manifests his detachment, his lack of group loyalties, his sullenness, his hostility to a social order that he does not understand and that does not understand him, in anti-religion and unpatriotism. An I. W. W. leader has formulated some of the vague resentment of the man without a home, a cause or a country.<sup>12</sup>

You ask me why the I. W. W. is not patriotic to the United States. If you were a bum without a blanket; if you had left your wife and kids when you went west for a job, and had never located them since; if your job had never kept you long enough in a place to qualify you to vote; if you slept in a lousy, sour bunkhouse, and deputy sheriffs shot your cooking pans full of holes and spilled your grub on the ground; if your wages were lowered on you when the bosses thought they had you down; if there was one law for Ford, Suhr and Mooney, and another for Harry Thaw; if every person who represented law and order and the nation beat you up, railroaded you to jail, and the good Christian people cheered and told them to go to it, how in hell do you expect a man to be patriotic? This war is a business man's war and we don't see why we should go out and get shot in order to save the lovely state of affairs which we now enjoy.

The detachment of hoboes and tramps and the futility of their movements are interestingly stated by Professor Park.<sup>13</sup>

. . . The trouble with the hobo mind is not lack of experience, but lack of vocation. The hobo is, to be sure, always on the

<sup>12</sup> Parker, Carlton, *The Casual Laborer*, p. 102.

<sup>13</sup> Park, R. E., in *World Tomorrow*, 6: 269.



move, but he has no destination, and naturally he never arrives. Wanderlust, which is the most elementary expression of the romantic temperament, and the romantic interest in life, has assumed for him, as for so many others, the character of a vice. He has gained his freedom, but he has lost his direction. Locomotion and change of scene have had for him no ulterior significance. It is locomotion for its own sake. Restlessness and the impulse to escape from the routine of ordinary life, which in the case of others frequently marks the beginning of some new enterprise, spends itself for him in movements that are expressive merely. The hobo seeks change solely for the sake of change; it is a habit, and, like the drug habit, moves in a vicious circle. The more he wanders, the more he must.

It is merely putting the matter in another way, to say that the trouble with the hobo, as Nels Anderson has pointed out in his recent volume, *The Hobo*, is that he is an individualist. He has sacrificed the human need of association and organization to a romantic passion for individual freedom. Society is, to be sure, made up of independent, locomoting individuals. It is this fact of locomotion, as I have said, that defines the very nature of society. But in order that there may be permanence and progress in society, the individuals who compose it must be located; they must be located, for one thing, in order to maintain communication, for it is only through communication that the moving equilibrium which we call society can be maintained.

All this leaves unmentioned the many other effects of homelessness—diseases, accidents and physical breakdown suffered by the men themselves; menace to safety, spread of disease and losses from theft and vandalism suffered by the general public.

**Police, Courts and the Law.**—There are many different agencies both public and private which have dealings with homeless men. They include employment bureaus, lodging houses, men's hotels, family welfare societies and city missions. But it is the police, the courts and the law that are most frequently invoked. Relying on criminal syndicalism statutes and vagrancy ordinances, a sheriff, constable or policeman can "pick up" almost any stranger and order him to "move on" or "run him in." What happens then we have elsewhere described.<sup>14</sup>

Then the iron door swings open and the "guest" is shown to his quarters. Most commonly these consist of a steel cage inside

<sup>14</sup> Queen, Stuart A., *The Passing of the County Jail*, pp. 2-3.

a room with carefully barred windows. Around the cage runs a corridor for the jailer. When they are inside the big room, the jailer unlocks a steel box which encases the levers and locking devices which control both the cage and the separate cell doors. The proper levers are pulled, the grated door opens, and the prisoner is told to "get in there." Inside the cage he may be assigned to a given cell by the officer, or he may be compelled to take a bath, possibly he will be sprayed with some disinfectant to kill the vermin. If lucky, he will get a pair of blankets and a straw tick that have not been used very long since their last washing.

He may go to court next morning or he may await trial for a month. If he is a "suspicious character," he may be held for as much as sixty days on a vagrancy charge; but the more usual procedure is to find him guilty of a misdemeanor, to serve sentence while evidence is sought which might convict him of a felony. While awaiting trial he will probably mingle freely with other men in the cage, some of them also awaiting the pleasure of the court, others "doing time," and possibly one or two held for lunacy hearings. He will join in poker or "crap" games, he will share in the "kangaroo court" if there be one, he will do his part of the cleaning each day.

When he goes to court he may have a lawyer, but this is very frequently dispensed with. Indeed the whole trial may not take more than five or ten minutes. What happens to him depends a good deal upon the habits of the judge. "His honor" may be accustomed to "floating undesirables," in which event the prisoner may be simply told to "get out of town"; or he may be found guilty and either given a suspended sentence or put on "probation," the condition being that he "leave town within two hours." If the judge has the "ten day" habit, the prisoner will receive a sentence of several days in jail, ground out as by a phonograph. Or mayhap it will be a fine of \$25.00 which means 25 days in jail for the moneyless victim. But if the judge is worried about the bolsheviki or has had a bad night's sleep, the offender may expect to "get" anywhere from 60 days to 6 months.

Suppose he gets a jail sentence. He will then return to his cage to spend the time as before, gambling, "spinning yarns," planning future crimes, learning I. W. W. doctrines. He is supposed to be undergoing a process of moral regeneration! At the expiration of his sentence the door is unlocked, he is given his "property"—or a part of it—and he is turned out on the street. He has no money, no job, no friends, his muscles are soft from idleness, his skin is sallow, and his lungs are filled with stale prison air, but he is supposed to be reformed.

**Constructive Programs.**—It would be both interesting and profitable to study the measures adopted by various



European countries to meet the needs of homeless men. But for lack of space we must refer the reader to other sources of information.<sup>15</sup> Here we must content ourselves with outlining the national program suggested by the United States Commission on Industrial Relations and the plan submitted to the Chicago Council of Social Agencies. In its final report<sup>16</sup> the Commission on Industrial Relations recommended the following national program for meeting the needs of homeless and unemployed men.

- a. Establishment of a national employment system.
- b. Regulation of all private employment agencies doing interstate business.
- c. Plans for the regularization of employment, the de-casualization of labor and the utilization of public work to fill in winter months and periods of business depression.
- d. Insurance against unemployment.
- e. Transportation of migratory laborers at low rates.
- f. Elimination of stealing rides on railroads.
- g. Establishment of working-men's hotels.
- h. Establishment of colonies or farms for "down and outs."

The Chicago plan<sup>17</sup> for homeless men was divided into two parts—a program for immediate action and one for future action. The program for immediate action included:

- a. Establishment of a municipal clearing house for non-family men to provide facilities for registration and treatment through reference to appropriate agencies.
- b. Re-opening of the municipal lodging house.
- c. Establishment of a municipal laundry and a municipal bath house.
- d. Industrial training for young migratory laborers, for the physically handicapped, mentally defective and others who are now unemployable but willing to work.
- e. Extension of the state free employment service and strict regulation of private employment agencies.

<sup>15</sup> Kelly, Edmond, *The Elimination of the Tramp*; Dawson, W. H., *The Vagrancy Problem*; Queen, S. A., *op. cit.*, pp. 31-34.

<sup>16</sup> Adapted from Final Report, Com. on Ind. Rel., pp. 103, 114-115.

<sup>17</sup> Anderson, Nels, *op. cit.*, pp. 271-279.

f. Regulation of private and commercial lodging houses and men's hotels.

g. Re-organization of the vagrancy court for hearing cases of chronic vagrants and beggars.

h. Protection of boys—providing wholesome and stimulating recreation to prevent aimless wandering, demonstrating the dangers of “flipping” trains, keeping young boys out of hotels and lodging houses in “Hobohemia,” forbidding playing or loitering in areas frequented by tramps, etc.

i. Education of the public through the press and through use of tickets of admission to the clearing house.

The program for future action included:

a. Bond issue for the erection of the clearing house, lodging house, municipal laundry and bath house.

b. An industrial institution for vocational training.

c. A state farm colony for compulsory detention and re-education of unemployables.

All these are to be regarded as devices for re-establishing definite relationships between homeless men and the larger community. Since the unadjustments of these men are bound up with their isolation, the major task of social agencies starts with the renewing of former contacts or making new ones possible. It involves some scheme for enabling non-family men to participate in the affairs of economic, political and other social groups. It includes the restoration of security and confidence that they will receive a “square deal.” It may not omit some provision for variety and adventure, but it will organize and control new experience with a view to making it contribute to the integration of personality. It will bring a few lasting friendships and some recognition from a larger number. In short, the task is one of restoring the man's social status and reshaping his personal life-organization.

#### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write out the stories of homeless men whom you may be able to interview, classifying them as seasonal laborers, hoboes, tramps, “home guard” and “bums.”



2. Visit a jail or police station and report on:
  - a. Attitude toward homeless men
  - b. Records: tabulate data on vagrancy cases
  - c. Buildings and furnishings—write description and draw plan
3. Visit a lodging house, "flop," men's hotel or mission, which caters to homeless men and report on:
  - a. Building and equipment
  - b. Proprietor and "help"
  - c. "Guests"
  - d. Rates, rules and regulations
4. Visit a private employment bureau, dressed appropriately, and apply for a job.
5. Spend enough time in "Hobohemia" to become acquainted in a general way with its institutions and population. Write a report on your observations.
6. Write abstracts of state laws and local ordinances which deal with vagrancy, begging, criminal syndicalism, employment bureaus, lodging houses, etc.

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## CHAPTER XI

### THE UNADJUSTMENTS OF OLD AGE

#### THE LEES—AN AGED COUPLE <sup>1</sup>

In mid-winter some twelve years ago, Mrs. Garrison telephoned to the Family Welfare Society of her city that there was in her neighborhood an aged couple in destitute circumstances. A visitor went at once to call on the old people and found that Mr. Lee was sick, that both he and his wife were troubled with "rheumatism," and that coal and groceries were needed. They were living in a little cottage which the landlady let them have rent free. (This generosity, in fact, continued most of the time for the next ten years.) The Lees seemed to be nice old people; they had no children, but there were several relatives living in or near the city. Mrs. Lee was the great-granddaughter of a Revolutionary hero, who had a claim against the Government for a considerable sum which had never been paid. A bill to compensate the heirs was now before Congress.

*Mr. Lee*, aged 71 when this story opens, had been a saloon-keeper in his younger days, and was himself a drinking man. Relatives said that while the money lasted the Lees lived well, either "in the best of boarding-houses" or in their own home keeping a servant. After a time Mr. Lee failed in business and secured a position as stationary engineer which he held several years until he fell and broke his hip. Since then he has not been able to work at all. For nearly six years he was a very sick man. This, with his wife's prolonged illness, consumed what savings they

<sup>1</sup> This is the summary of a record in the files of a Family Welfare Society. As everywhere else in this book, the confidential nature of the record has been guarded by change of names and other data by which the family might be recognized.

had and left them stranded. Mr. Lee for a long time seemed loath to accept "charity," although the necessity for having financial assistance over a period of years gradually broke down this attitude. He objected still more to all suggestions that he and his wife should go to the County Home (almshouse). He seemed quite devoted to his wife and was anxious to maintain their home together as long as possible. About five years after our story begins, Mrs. Lee had a paralytic stroke and was taken to a hospital. He could hardly wait for her return and insisted that she be brought back after six months, although he was hardly able to care for himself. As years went on, Mr. Lee "got things mixed in his head," especially in regard to money matters. He never gave up hope of a Congressional grant, even when it was apparent to his friends that nothing would come of this. More and more he criticized his relatives for not coming to see him oftener and for not giving him more assistance. For both these charges there was some excuse, although most of the relatives were unable to give much either of time or of money.

*Mrs. Lee*, aged 63 when our story begins, had been confined to her bed for three years with "rheumatism," but was now much improved. Later, however, she had a "stroke" which paralyzed her entire left side and from which she never fully recovered. She was rather hard of hearing and had trouble with her eyes. The stroke of paralysis seemed to affect her mind. What wonder that she became discouraged? She suffered much from the summer heat, became despondent and wondered why she had to live. But afterward she became more cheerful. When her husband berated the relatives she always had some excuse for them. Also she was much more willing than he to go to the County Home. At the age of 71 she had a second stroke of paralysis. She later died in the County Home.

*Relatives.*—Mrs. Lee was one of eighty heirs to the estate of the Revolutionary hero mentioned before. But apparently the hope of getting an appropriation from Congress was the main, if not the only, basis of family



solidarity. Five years after this account opens, twenty-six of the relatives gathered at the home of Mrs. Lee's cousin to discuss their expected windfall. They were much elated over the prospects and at this time agreed to see that the Lees should not suffer want. However, their good resolutions dwindled away with their waning hopes of public money. At no time was a definite plan made for cooperation in supporting and caring for the Lees, although certain individuals did as much as it was reasonable to expect. While the family itself may be justly charged with this neglect, still their inertia is not hard to understand, especially since Mr. Lee was "high and mighty" when making money and refused to help his poor relatives. It was the special responsibility of the social case worker in charge to develop a definite plan for joint effort on behalf of this aged couple and some effort was made in this direction. The visitor tried to bring about another family gathering to organize at least the financial resources, but the relatives did not assemble. Letters written to a number of relatives failed to bring any response. Most of those who lived in or near the city were seen individually, in person. They were all found to be people of small means. One man was a fireman, another a street-car conductor. Mr. Lee's two sisters were almost as old as he. Their children and grandchildren were not greatly interested in the Lees nor able to do much for them. The most helpful relative was a sister-in-law of Mrs. Lee's who gave from her own very limited funds, did washing for the Lees, carried them provisions and helped to care for their house when she could.

*Relief and Service.*—There has been a good deal of irregular and unsystematic assistance from friends, relatives and neighbors. This included rent, gas, food, clothing, stove, rug, coal, etc. One woman, who sent \$10 a month more or less regularly, formerly ran a house of prostitution over Mr. Lee's saloon.

The social agencies concerned had in the course of their dealings with the Lees five distinct plans. (1) The first was to organize the relatives so that, each contributing a little, the old couple could be supported in comfort—it was

expected that for some needs the Family Welfare Society or the County would make a small allowance. This failed, as has been suggested above. (2) The second plan was for the Daughters of the American Revolution to raise the funds necessary to secure admission to a private old people's home. Just when this seemed about to go through, the relatives told Mr. Lee that if they got any money from the government, the Home would expect them to turn it over. After this he would not consider entering the Home. (3) Because Mr. Lee gave some account of having been a Confederate soldier, efforts were made through the Veterans of the Confederacy to secure the admission of the Lees to the State Home for Confederate Veterans. But Mr. Lee never offered information definite enough to establish his right to enter the Home. The visitor from the Family Welfare Society thought his memory was not so poor as it appeared, but that Mr. Lee had probably had some trouble, perhaps deserted or was court-martialed. (4) The fourth plan was to secure a county pension and, (5) the fifth was to send the Lees to the County Home.

The Family Welfare Society sent a visitor regularly for twelve years and during much of that time helped with groceries and intermittently with coal and clothing. Altogether the society has spent probably \$1,000 for material relief besides rendering considerable personal service.

The County was appealed to for aid rather early in the history of this "case," but a pension was denied on the ground that the Lees should be in the County Home. However, after nearly ten years, a county pension of \$20 was secured. This was later increased to \$25. About a year later the old couple was persuaded to enter the County Home where they stayed two months and then went to the home of Mrs. Lee's sister-in-law who had helped them so much before. For another year the county pension was received. Then the Lees went again to the County Home where Mrs. Lee recently died.

From time to time medical agencies have helped look after the health needs of these old folks—two hospitals, a dispensary, and a dental clinic have served them. At



Christmas time the Mayor's committee has remembered them. Mrs. Lee was kept from the "potter's field," and now arrangements have been made for Mr. Lee's burial when death, which cannot be long deferred, shall come. Relatives have kept up enough insurance to pay the funeral expenses and a lot will be provided in a private cemetery.

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Has anything constructive been accomplished here? At least Mr. and Mrs. Lee, who were evidently greatly attached to one another, were enabled to spend their declining years together. They seem to have had enough to eat and to wear and a comfortable place in which to live. At the end they are spared the ignominy of a pauper burial. Beyond that, not much can be said. It is interesting to note the three principal social problems presented by this old couple. One was the absence of children and grandchildren. Another was the lack of solidarity in the larger kinship group—for which Mr. and Mrs. Lee were quite as responsible as were their relatives. The third was the "unreasonable" attitude based on the expectation of a large sum of money—which never came—from the government. It is not fair to assume that Mr. Lee's former occupation of saloon-keeper had anything to do with his difficulties in old age. Even his drinking seems to have played a minor rôle.

A thing to be emphasized at the outset is that there is nothing pathological about old age itself either physically or socially. It is just as normal a phase of life as are youth and maturity. The pathology of old age consists on the physical side in such misfortunes as loss of sight and hearing, accident and disease, and on the social side in family disorganization and poverty which leave stranded even old people who are physically and mentally sound. Being thus stranded they lose their grip on things and "surrender to mental forebodings."

The number of aged persons for whom no adequate provision exists is difficult to estimate. The Census Bureau reports that there were in 1920 approximately 5,000,000 persons in the United States sixty-five years of age and

over. But these figures include some who are economically independent, some who share quite naturally the fortunes of a family group and a great many who manage somehow to eke out a living, as well as those who are dependent upon outside assistance. Squier<sup>2</sup> estimated in 1910 that there were 1,250,000 persons over sixty-five years of age who were dependent upon public and private charity. This estimate was admittedly conservative at that time and the number has probably increased since the War. But besides those in receipt of material relief there are thousands of old people who make all kinds of sacrifices in order to escape the stigma of charity. They work beyond their strength; they deny themselves proper food and clothing, or they are supported by children at the expense of growing families. Hence it is quite impossible to determine the actual number of unadjusted aged persons.

**Causes of Distress Among the Aged.**—Speaking before the National Conference of Charities and Correction in 1908, Frederick L. Hoffman gave voice to the popular notion of why people come down to old age without adequate provision for the necessities of life.<sup>3</sup>

The problem of poverty in old age, as generally met with, is primarily the result of ill-spent years, or ill-spent earnings, or ill-spent savings. . . .

The vast majority of wage-earners are fully able to provide for their own old age out of savings deducted from present earnings, amply sufficient to meet a reasonable standard of living. . . . As it has been said, "parents who have done well by their children seldom come to grief in their old age, except by very special misfortune, or unless something intervenes to weaken the bond. . . ."

At the prevailing rate of wages it is possible for the masses of our wage-earners to provide the support necessary in their old age, at their own cost and in their own way, granted that they use judgment in their family expenditures, save with intelligence, and place the money where it has a reasonable security of not being lost or stolen. . . .

No greater contrast could be found than in the conclusions of Abraham Epstein after serving as Director of the

<sup>2</sup> Squier, L. W., *Old Age Dependency in the United States*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Nat. Conf. Char. & Cor., 1908: 228-230.



**Pennsylvania Commission to investigate Old Age Pensions.<sup>4</sup>**

. . . The investigations of the aged seem to show clearly that for the wage-earner who has passed beyond the half-century mark the all-important decision whether he is to escape the poor-house in old age and a pauper's grave at the end, does not altogether depend upon his own desires and ambitions. This decision will be made largely by the social forces which lie outside his own control, namely, the extent and economic standing of his family and his own physical vigor.

. . . Men have always grown old, it is true, but now when they must seek work in a system whose demands for intense application or speed are often merciless, they are rejected as unemployable and find themselves without means of support at an earlier age. In exceptionally fatiguing or dangerous trades the "human scrap heap" age is distressingly low. A system which in the past has paid wages far too low to permit the average workmen to prepare for old age by saving, is annually refusing jobs to thousands who are "too old" to do its work.

These two statements are significant not merely because they are mutually contradictory; but because the first makes the difficulties of old age a matter of morals, while the second reduces them largely to economics. Indeed, these are the two most common "explanations," but we shall endeavor to point out the futility of the first and the inadequacy of the second. We shall try to show the necessity of studying the total situation in which numerous elements have to be considered. One of these elements is frequently poverty, but poverty alone does not create unadjustment in old age. On the contrary, aged members of "poor" families frequently get along very well, while others experience personal difficulties even in the midst of wealth. In one aspect the troubles of the aged center about their isolation. When the contacts of employment, business or professional life can no longer be maintained, and when there are no near relatives or friends, or when family solidarity is broken down, advancing years involve a real tragedy. When an elderly person sees himself pushed to one side, he tends to become bitter and his unadjustment is not likely to be ended except by death.

<sup>4</sup> Epstein, Abraham, *Facing Old Age*, pp. 45, xiv-xv.

**Family Connections.**—Evidence in support of the statement made earlier that old age itself does not necessarily involve any maladjustment is found in the reports of the several state commissions which have investigated conditions affecting the aged. These same reports indicate clearly that one of the factors which determine the status of old people is the number of children and others near of kin. Dr. O'Grady states in the 1918 report of the Ohio Commission that of 2,260 infirmary patients, 45 per cent were never married at all. Most of the remainder had one or more children living, but only 10 per cent of the whole number had children able to support them. The Pennsylvania Commission reported in 1919 that nearly two-thirds of the almshouse inmates studied had no children living. In contrast with these, a house-to-house canvass showed that only 10 per cent of the aged persons discovered in the general population were without living children, while nearly 70 per cent had two or more children alive. These and other data seem to indicate that social and economic difficulties among the aged are in inverse ratio to the number of close relatives, and are in part at least a result of the lack of family connections. This situation is particularly striking in the case of the single women who have had to make their own living. After fifty they find it difficult to obtain steady employment and very commonly their wages have not been such as to permit much saving for old age.

Not only is it found that in many cases there are no near relatives, but in instances where there are children or others close of kin, they display an unwillingness to support their aged parents, uncles, aunts, etc. They are usually people of small means and large families of their own. They could scarcely maintain their aged kinsmen without depriving themselves or their children of some of the necessities of life. Sometimes the younger people are unwilling to help out for quite different reasons. Perhaps the now aged father had deserted his family when the children were young and helpless. Perhaps he was a drunkard, a loafer, or in other ways failed to meet his responsibilities as a



parent. It is not altogether unnatural that under such circumstances filial aid should be refused. But in a host of instances there is no question of aid at all. The care of aged kinsmen, especially parents, is accepted as a part of the folkways. It is not charity nor even an unexpected burden. It is what the Germans call *selbstverständlich*. This is true to a considerable extent among many of the European peasants and we have observed it time and again among the more isolated agricultural people of the United States. In an earlier day family provision for the aged was apparently well-nigh universal. But especially since the industrial revolution mobility has increased; the physical separation of members of a family drawn hither and yon to find employment has broken down family solidarity; while the change from country to town life has deprived the aged of those little tasks through which they could still remain useful members of the household.

**Economic Conditions.**—But along with the loss of family connections we must consider those economic conditions which make it difficult, if not impossible, to save for old age. The impersonal relations of modern industry, the short-time contracts, the high labor turn-over mean that the employer frequently has no sense of responsibility for his workmen as they advance in years. The pace of the modern factory uses men up more rapidly than did the simpler and more leisurely processes of an earlier age. It also forces their elimination while they are still capable of much good work, providing they may do it at a slower rate. Evidence of the increasingly early elimination of men from gainful employment appears in the following table which is quoted from Epstein.<sup>5</sup>

DECLINE OF GAINFULLY OCCUPIED MIDDLE-AGED  
MALES

Ages	Percentage of Men Gainfully Occupied		
	1890	1900	1910
45-54 .....	96.6	95.5	
55-64 .....	92.9	90.0	
65 and over..	73.8	68.4	63 (estimate)
55 and over..	85.0	80.7	76.8 (estimate)
45 and over..		87.9	85.9

<sup>5</sup> Epstein, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

In the following chapter evidence will be submitted showing that for the great majority of wage earners the income during the most active years is not high enough to make possible adequate savings for old age. In addition to a low wage rate, account must also be taken of interruptions due to business depressions, seasonal changes, introduction of new processes, strikes, industrial accidents and sickness. Not only do these interruptions of employment mean that the income stops; they often involve extra expenditures and the depletion of savings, as do other misfortunes such as fires, business failure, bad loans or poor investments. Why saving for old age is especially difficult for wage earners and can hardly be relied upon as an effective means of eliminating the economic stresses of old age is summarily stated by Rubinow in the following words.<sup>6</sup>

1. The amount necessary is evidently greater, for old age is not a brief transitory condition, such as sickness or unemployment may be. It would require a continuous saving for a great many years.

2. The amount necessary is uncertain. There is, after all, the even or more than even chance of early death before old age may be reached. And in addition, the wage-worker has no means at all to know how much he would have to save, nor whether his savings will prove sufficient.

3. It is the final emergency, which in the natural course of events must be preceded by all other emergencies of a working-man's existence. Inevitably the fund of savings would have to be used to meet all these emergencies.

4. The remoteness of the emergency would prevent necessary savings at a time when such savings would be easiest, that is in earliest years.

5. To assume that under these conditions all working-men could save sufficient to provide them against old age, would be to disregard all real conditions of the wage-worker's existence. Even in the most saving of our States, the average amounts held per depositor in the savings banks are ridiculously small as compared to the amount needed for a sufficient income at old age.

6. Finally, special savings for old age would only be possible through a persistent, systematic, and obstinate disregard of the needs of the workingman's family, which would make the preaching of such special savings a decidedly immoral force.

<sup>6</sup> Rubinow, I. M., *Social Insurance*, p. 313.



**Personal Factors.**—In addition to the lack of family connections and economic handicaps there are frequently personal factors involved in the difficulties of the aged. Frequently there is sickness or other physical disability. The Pennsylvania Commission on Old Age Pensions studied 3,400 almshouse patients of whom only 13 per cent were reported as being in good or fair health, another 13 per cent were crippled or deformed, 10 per cent were defective in sight or hearing and a large number were suffering from various diseases. Only 5 per cent were considered really able-bodied old people, while 55 per cent were totally incapacitated. For the same age groups in the house-to-house studies, 65 per cent were reported to be in good or fair health and only 35 per cent sick or disabled.

Unfortunate mental conditions also frequently complicate the situation of the aged. It is a common practice for almshouse superintendents to report large numbers of their cases as feeble-minded. This characterization is almost certainly incorrect, because as a general thing the feeble-minded are not found to be long lived. However, there are many old people of somewhat inferior mental organization and balance who, through the wear and tear of industrial life, go to pieces mentally, frequently manifesting the symptoms which characterize senile dementia. We have no data by which to compare the aged in institutions with those who are living an independent life in respect to mental condition, but it seems quite safe to assume that those who are living happily with their families or who are able to maintain an independent existence, are essentially sound mentally as well as physically; while a large proportion of those receiving both public and private care are known to be deteriorating in mind and body.

Besides those mental states described as feeble-mindedness or psychoses, there are various sorts of personality difficulties which make it hard for old people to get along with their relatives. Perhaps in an earlier day they have been indolent, thriftless ne'er-do-wells. Perhaps they always "carried a chip on their shoulders," neglected their families or were otherwise irresponsible. Perhaps during youth

and maturity they were wholesome, well balanced people, but under the stress of many difficult years, they have at last become irritable, dictatorial, given to complaining and fussing. In either case, by the time of reaching old age, they have alienated their kinsmen, lost their friends and made themselves obnoxious to those who might otherwise be expected to help them.

**The Demoralization of Old Age.**—The consequences of allowing people to come to an old age of poverty and loneliness are not all on the surface. It is easy to recognize the financial burden on relatives, private charities and public institutions. The costs to industry are a little less obvious, but no less real. If men are to be turned off because of their years, those approaching old age may fall into a spirit of hopelessness and lose interest in their work. If they are kept on indefinitely in spite of loss in working power, they increase production costs and tend to break down the morale of younger workers. If the employer has a system of discretionary pensions, there is still an element of uncertainty and a subtle pressure to conform to all the demands of the company, which prevent the growth of true loyalty and ultimately must lower the output. But more serious than any of these is the personal demoralization of the aging workers themselves. The following excerpts portray vividly the injury done to personality.

But I did know the bitter facts of many an aged life. I knew men who had served the same firm for more than twenty years turned away at a week's notice, because they were "too old." I saw the effects of that stunning blow. I saw the almost frantic search for another job that could never be found. I saw the sickening of heart that sank into despair. Everywhere the same answer was given, couched in differing phrases, but always meaning, "You are too old to work."

I saw what came of them. In some cases they went to live with a poor son or daughter. They knew they were a heavy extra charge upon the meager income of the narrow home. Yet they had to stay, until the burden could be no longer borne, or unemployment came and there was "nothing coming in" either for child or for parent.

I saw old men in desperation applying for charity. I knew the galling inquisition they went through. I knew the pitiless



exposure to prying eyes of their life's nakedness. And I saw them, after this ordeal, refused the help they sought and almost thought they had obtained—refused because of some long-gone fault in early life.

I saw men who trembled for very age hawking trifles in the streets, and tottering on through mud and sleet and icy wind. I saw men slowly wither up, body and soul, under the blighting sense that they were wanted nowhere, and a burden everywhere. Only those who have seen it can conceive the misery of the poor old fellow who finds that society has no longer any use for him, who feels he is done with and done for. Manly old men come to me, with tears running down their cheeks, imploring me as if I were Almighty God to have pity on them and get them work—"Anything, oh, anything, no matter what it is, to keep me from the workhouse."<sup>7</sup>

Tannenbaum asked an old man who had come to jail every year for some time why he returned so frequently. The reply was:

"Well, my boy, what can an old man do? I ain't got no home, no family; nobody wants an old man, and the work is too hard, even if I could get it. I am not a strong man any more. When spring comes I go across the river to the heights, sleep in a barn, mow a lawn here and there, chop a little wood and get by. When it gets cold again, I come back to the city, take a few good drinks, then break a window and get six months in the 'pen.' In this place I am at least sure of a bed and kept out of the cold."

"But," said Tannenbaum, "why don't you go to a charity institution?"

"Who—me? You must think I am a beggar. I tell you what, young fellow, I ain't. I am a self-respecting man, and I'd rather be in jail any day than in a charity home."<sup>8</sup>

Here was an old man who escaped real demoralization by adjusting himself to the status of an intermittent "jail bird." No doubt in the county penitentiary he found companionship as well as food and shelter. In contrast, the following newspaper clipping displays total failure to effect an accommodation and the natural end of a completely disorganized life.

<sup>7</sup> Stead, F. H., *How Old Age Pensions Began to Be*, p. 5, quoted by Squier, *op. cit.*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>8</sup> Tannenbaum, Frank, *Wall Shadows*, pp. 59-60.

Camden, N. J., Feb. 23.—Heartbroken because he had to go to the almshouse, Jacob ———, 78 years old, of this place, was taken ill and died yesterday afternoon.

Jacob, and his brother, George, 76 years old, lived and worked together all their lives. They have spent their last declining years alone together, with no relatives, at their home here. As age crept upon them they found themselves unable to obtain work, but they eked out their slender savings until the final penny was gone. Arrangements were made to have them sent to the almshouse at Blackwood, and the news was too much for the elder of the brothers and he became ill. His brother went to the almshouse alone.<sup>9</sup>

**The Almshouse** is at once a haven of rest for the aged and an object of their greatest dread. At its worst it is a county's human dumping ground. At its best it is a public home for needy old people. Very commonly it is situated on a farm in the open country with buildings sometimes modern, though frequently dilapidated. Fire protection, convenience of service, light, air, cleanliness and sanitation receive varying degrees of attention but are all too commonly neglected by the political appointees who go through the motions of making a home for unfortunate old people. Sometimes meals are attractively served in cheerful dining rooms and consist of wholesome and palatable food; but so far as our experience goes they are more frequently served in poorly lighted rooms on bare tables; the food is poorly cooked, rarely varied and carelessly served. Some almshouses have individual rooms for their patients and a very few make provision for aged couples; but we have more frequently seen beds crowded into large wards where clothing hung about the walls and miscellaneous personal possessions were tucked under the beds. In the majority of these institutions patients spend their days loafing in the wards or hallways. Their well-known aversion to fresh air, together with constant smoking, prevent proper ventilation. They lie on the beds part of the time and keep them mussed and dirty. Sometimes they smoke in bed and set fire to the house. In other almshouses there are smoking rooms, library, sunparlor, and auditorium. Phono-

<sup>9</sup> Quoted by Epstein, *op. cit.*, p. 52.



graph, radio and piano to which is occasionally added a moving picture machine are found in an exceedingly small number of institutions, but are greatly appreciated wherever they are supplied. The systems of admission and dismissal range all the way from the acceptance of anyone who comes to the door, to a careful social diagnosis by trained case workers. Records are usually very prefactorily kept and contain practically no information of any consequence about the patients.

**Other Public and Private Agencies.**—While old people without relatives or money are most commonly sent to the almshouse, there are other agencies for meeting their needs. There are public institutions such as soldiers' homes and hospitals with wards for chronic cases; there are public relief departments administered by officials usually known as commissioners of the poor. In some states the law permits the granting of county pensions to disabled persons who have reached a certain age. A relatively small number of old people are provided for through pensions for police firemen, teachers, soldiers, sailors, and other federal, state and municipal employes. Of all these public agencies the so-called out-door relief departments undoubtedly reach the largest number of needy old people.

In addition to the public agencies, there are numerous private institutions and organizations. There are old people's homes maintained by churches, fraternal orders and other non-sectarian societies. The denominational homes are sometimes well equipped and staffed, and open their doors rather freely. The fraternal orders usually receive only members into their institutions, while the non-sectarian homes frequently charge admission fees which put them beyond the reach of the great majority of those who need their care. As in the case of the almshouses, these private old people's homes range from dilapidated old residences run by pious and ignorant, but well-meaning folk, to attractive family hotels administered by a staff of competent workers.

It will be recalled that it was a family welfare society that furnished much of the money and rendered much of

the service to the Lees. Probably next to public relief departments and almshouses, private organizations of this type meet the needs of a larger number of unfortunate old people than do any other agencies. However, there are in addition to the family welfare societies a great many private charities with varied connections and varying grades of work. There are also benefit schemes maintained by fraternal orders and trade unions which ought not to be classed with the charities at all because they are essentially cooperative in character.

The significant thing about the great majority of these agencies is their attitude toward the aged. Most of them quite naturally prefer to deal with "nice" old people whose difficulties are predominantly economic. Yet they frequently fail to provide adequately for them and reduce their clients to bare subsistence. As a result, they not only fail in many instances to overcome unadjustments; they sometimes unwittingly help to produce them and gradually break down morale.

**Industrial Pensions.**—A considerable number of the larger corporations such as the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, United States Steel Corporation and International Harvester Company maintain industrial pensions on one basis or another. The motives behind these pension schemes are rather complex. There is usually an element of humanitarianism or philanthropy, mingled, however, with entirely selfish purposes. It is no secret that they are intended to keep men from leaving the company to seek employment elsewhere, to make the men hesitate to ask for higher wages, shorter hours or other improved conditions of work, and especially to interfere with trade unionism. So generally is this true that Justice Brandeis has described many of these pension schemes as the "new peonage." The principal features of such pension plans are these. They are usually financed by the employer without contributions from the workers. Rarely are the employes given any participation in control or administration. Membership in the pension system is ordinarily not compulsory so that large numbers of workmen never derive



any benefits from it. The granting of a pension is usually discretionary with the management, even though the established conditions of age and length of service have been met. The age of retirement is usually from 65 to 70 and the years of service required vary from 10 to 25. The amounts of the pension also vary greatly from company to company.

The objections to these industrial pensions have been summarized by Epstein as follows: (1) They lessen the attractiveness of labor unions and make the men more loyal to their employers than to each other. (2) They are merely deferred wages and it is commonly known that wages are frequently lower in those industries that have the best pension schemes. (3) They interfere with the mobility of labor often to the detriment of both the individual and the community and offer opportunities for arbitrary discriminations against workers. (4) The age for retirement is generally too high and the pension too low. (5) In the case of many concerns there is no guaranty that the pension promised will be granted at all or that if granted it will be lasting and permanent even though all requirements are lived up to by the employe. Some concerns terminate their pension systems without sufficient notice and others compel pensioners to serve as strike breakers. (6) These schemes generally make no provision for cases of total disability when an employe has not served the required time. (7) Generally before a pension is granted one must have lived up to the most stringent requirements and provisions.

**State Pensions and Insurance** are of three general types, (1) voluntary and subsidized systems of old age insurance, (2) compulsory, contributory old age insurance, and (3) non-contributory or straight old age pension systems. Voluntary and subsidized systems are to be found in Belgium, Canada and Japan. Massachusetts and Wisconsin have also made a start in this direction. Under the Canadian law any resident of the Dominion may purchase a government annuity of not less than \$50 or more than \$5,000 a year, paying premiums through the post office. But like most voluntary systems this has not been utilized

by many people. From 1908 to 1920 less than 5,000 annuities were issued.

Compulsory, contributory old age insurance is to be found in Austria, Germany, Czecho-Slovakia, France, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Netherlands and several other European countries. Germany was the pioneer in this field, having established old age insurance in 1889. Under the law of 1911 this insurance was compulsory for all manual workers and all other wage earners and salaried persons whose annual income did not exceed 2,000 marks. The age of eligibility for the pension was set in 1916 at 65 years. In 1913 a separate system for salaried employes went into operation, and in 1921 the income limit for those subject to obligatory insurance was increased to 17,000 marks. The expense of the German system is shared by the state, the employers and the employes. The rate of payment and the amount of the pension vary with the income. In 1913 the number of persons insured against old age and invalidity was over 16,000,000, one-fourth of the total population.

Non-contributory or straight old age pension systems are to be found in Australia, New Zealand, Denmark and Great Britain. Very recently the legislatures of Montana, Nevada and Pennsylvania <sup>10</sup> have passed similar laws. The British Act of 1908 as amended in 1919, provides pensions for all British subjects over the age of 70, who have resided in the United Kingdom for twenty years, who are of good character, whose total income does not exceed 20 shillings a week. The amount of the pension varies with the income, but may not exceed 10 shillings a week. In 1919 the number of persons receiving pensions was 920,000 and the amount paid them was nearly 18,000,000 pounds. One of the interesting things about the British system is that over one-half of the people who have passed the age of 70 are eligible for the pension.

The social significance of these pension schemes is their contribution toward a sense of security. The pensions alone

<sup>10</sup> Since writing these words the Pennsylvania law has been declared unconstitutional. See Survey, 53: 69-70.



can not go far toward breaking down the isolation of old people, restoring family ties and lost social status. But they do assure a certain minimum level of subsistence and obviate certain fears which might otherwise fill the minds of the aged.

**How Avoid the Unadjustments of Old Age?**—Non-industrial peoples seem to have no large problem of old-age dependency and demoralization. Is it possible for us to make sure that the needs of every old person will be met without retarding social and economic development or imposing undue burdens on relatives, philanthropists and taxpayers? We believe that it is at least possible to make definite headway in this direction. We doubt if it is feasible to restore the extended family solidarity of our forefathers. Mobility and the diversification of interests stand in the way. But it does seem practicable to make an industrial program for the elimination of the economic factors involved in the pathology of old age. In succeeding chapters we shall discuss proposed plans for the increase of real wages, reduction of irregular work and unemployment, minimizing of industrial accidents, business failures and other financial misfortunes. We shall also call attention to programs for reducing sickness, both physical and mental, and for strengthening personality instead of letting it break down in the crises of life. If the aged are to be freed from economic dependency, social isolation and personal demoralization, this can only be brought about through a well-rounded social program, such as is involved in the prevention of all other human ills.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write out the stories of old people whom you know, including both adjusted and unadjusted, well and sick, self-supporting and dependent.
2. Visit an almshouse or "poor farm" and report on:
  - a. Buildings, grounds, furnishings
  - b. Staff: training, experience, salaries, attitudes toward the old people
  - c. Food and its handling
  - d. Clothing, beds, personal possessions

- e. Recreation and employment of the aged
- f. Records, methods of admission and dismissal
- g. Burial
- 3. Visit and make a similar report on a private old people's home or old soldiers' home.
- 4. Write abstracts of the laws of your state which pertain to the aged, including poor relief, pensions, institutional care.
- 5. Study the old age pension and insurance systems of various states and countries, compare them and note especially what may and may not be expected from them.
- 6. Study the provision made for aged members of trade unions and fraternal orders. Note their significance for the preservation of personal integrity and self-respect.
- 7. Study the pension schemes of one or more corporations. Note especially whether they are contributory, compulsory, discretionary, and whether employes share in the administration. Seek to discover the attitudes of employers and employes toward these pensions.

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## **Part II**

# **ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION AND PERSONAL DEMORALIZATION**





## CHAPTER XII

### POVERTY—INCOME AND STANDARDS OF LIVING

In the discussions that have gone before we have approached our problems from the standpoints of family disorganization and personal demoralization. But the difficulties of many of these same persons and families may be dealt with from another angle, namely, the *economic*. Mrs. Jenkins and her children suffered the loss from the family circle not merely of a husband and father but of a breadwinner as well. From the standpoint of finances the Newtons were in a very similar situation. But there was one important difference in that Mrs. Newton had no resource like the compensation which Mrs. Jenkins received from her husband's former employer. With the Meads the income was too small to make possible suitable living quarters and a housekeeper. The Downing children would have had enough to live on had not their patrimony been squandered by a dissolute mother. Of the homeless men, Burke was financially independent; Norman and Richards were making a living by methods that were dubious to say the least; Jamison alone was an obvious public burden. Through a series of misfortunes the Lees found it necessary to ask for extended assistance in their old age. But on the other hand, it should be remembered that there was nothing which we would describe as poverty in the cases of Kenneth McGregor, Joe Pastor, Ruth Gaines, or the Haynes family. We think it worth while to stress this point, because many people seem to believe that most personal and family troubles have their root in money matters. In the case material we have examined so far financial problems have been consistently secondary in importance. But in the two summaries presented below poverty is in

the foreground, closely linked with ignorance and migration in the one case and with exploitation in the other.

#### THE CAPODANNOS—HANDICAPPED BY IGNORANCE <sup>1</sup>

One day in 1922 somebody reported to the Visiting Nurse Association that the Capodanno baby was not well. When the nurse went to the house she found five undernourished children and their mother in much the same condition. They occupied a rather poor four-room tenement for which they paid \$12 a month rent. There were no screens and the house was full of flies which swarmed over the baby in her crib. The house was dirty as were the children's clothes. Mrs. Capodanno spoke no English and seemed almost hopelessly ignorant of everything. Mr. Capodanno was working in a meat packing house, receiving 37½ cents an hour, but some days there was no work, so he was lucky to get \$15.00 a week. Obviously this was not enough for a family of seven.

*Mr. Capodanno* came to the United States fifteen years ago and had lived for the past ten years in the same city. He was a typical South Italian, with very dark eyes, black mustache and bright yellow knitted cap. He spoke broken English and apparently had little schooling in his own country. Because he had frequent colds he was examined at a dispensary where he was pronounced well and sound except for a slight bronchial trouble. Probably the colds and the irritation in his throat were due to working alternately in warm and cold rooms. Mr. Capodanno also said that the foreman gave him all the disagreeable, dirty work and in various ways "treated him mean." There was some difficulty in locating his name on the payroll, because the paymaster, not understanding his broken English, had written down "Carlton." It is evident that being a "dago," Mr. Capodanno did not receive much consideration at his place of employment. After a time he found a place in a restaurant in which he was much happier. But his wages were only \$11.00 a week and his hours were very

<sup>1</sup>Summary of a record in the files of a Family Welfare Society.



long. Sometimes he did not get home until twelve or one o'clock at night. Because of his wife's ignorance of English Mr. Capodanno had to do all the shopping. Altogether he was carrying a heavy burden and it is little wonder that he became discouraged.

*Mrs. Capodanno*, also a native of Italy, was nine years her husband's junior. She spoke no English at all and was illiterate in her own language. She was ignorant of nearly everything that is necessary to make a successful housewife. For example, she gave the children coffee to drink and let them eat uncooked macaroni. She could see no reason for learning English, but she did try to keep an account of household expenditures under the guidance of the social worker. Mrs. Capodanno, perhaps in accordance with Italian folkways, was rather completely dominated by her husband. She asked his permission for almost everything the social worker wanted her to do.

*Children.*—There were five children when the Family Welfare Society first made the acquaintance of the Capodannos. In age they ranged from ten months to eight years. During the next two years the youngest child died of pneumonia and a sixth was born. The three older children were in public school and doing as well as could be expected in view of their lack of proper food and clothing.

*Relief and Service.*—Material relief has been provided in the shape of groceries, milk, coal, clothing and a layette for the new baby. But of course mere relief could not solve the problems of the Capodanno family. In fact, the combination of poorly paid work, lack of special skill, general ignorance, large family and poor health is not an easy one to break.

As to health, a visiting nurse went often to the home. Mrs. Capodanno was induced to take the children with some regularity to a clinic where they were weighed and measured, and sometimes examined more thoroughly. Mr. Capodanno went to another clinic where his bronchial trouble seemed to be improved. One of the girls was in a hospital for some time.

A church sent baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Two of the little girls attended one of its sewing classes. The W. C. T. U. "Americanization" worker offered to teach Mrs. Capodanno English, but never was able to make a start. The Salvation Army would have taken some of the children to a summer camp, but their mother refused to let them go. But the next summer she did permit them to spend two weeks at another camp.

The visitor from the Family Welfare Society tried patiently to teach Mrs. Capodanno how to buy, cook, and keep house generally. She left health leaflets—which the children at least could read. She talked with Mr. Capodanno's employers endeavoring to secure better wages and more favorable working conditions. She has been active in season and out on behalf of this family, but much remains to be done before the Capodannos can stand on their own feet.

On the occasion of a recent visit the social worker found the house clean and the baby fat and healthy. Mrs. Capodanno was following closely the instructions of the visiting nurse. She kept a window open a few inches for the sake of fresh air. She seemed herself to be brighter and happier. But Mr. Capodanno was out of work. The restaurant had closed. There have been some personal gains, but unless they are relieved of the economic insecurity the Capodannos may easily become demoralized again. Under existing conditions it is hard to see how an unskilled laborer can possibly earn enough to support a wife and five children no matter how hard he may try.

#### THE JOHNSONS AND THE LOAN SHARKS <sup>2</sup>

In April, 1918, Mrs. Johnson, a colored woman of some thirty years, came to the office of the Family Welfare Society in a southern city to see if she could secure some night work to increase her income. She was earning \$3.25 a week by washing, but found this insufficient to maintain herself and two children. Her husband earned two dollars a day, but did not contribute very regularly to the support of the family. About three years ago, when the second

<sup>2</sup> Summary of a Red Cross case record.



child was born, Mr. Johnson was out of work for several months. Both Mr. and Mrs. Johnson had borrowed various small amounts from several different loan companies. At the present time their debts amounted to \$45.60. These consisted of nine separate loans varying from \$2.20 to \$13.15. The interest rates were outrageous; for example, \$1.40 a month on a loan of \$3.00 and \$1.70 a week on a loan of \$5.00. Neither Mr. nor Mrs. Johnson knew how much the other had borrowed, or from whom. Indeed, it was not without the intervention of a social worker that they learned just what their obligations were. A grocer to whom they were supposed to owe \$20, never let them know how their account stood, said it was "all a mystery and he (Mr. Johnson) could not understand." However, the social worker succeeded in clearing up this "mystery." The family had been living for ten years in two rooms for which they paid \$5.40 a month. Curiously no one regarded this crowding of four persons into two rooms as involving a social problem.

*Mr. Johnson*, aged 35, completed the eighth grade in the public schools. He and his wife had been childhood friends and were married ten years ago. During the first years of their married life he provided reasonably well for her, but has never furnished clothing for the children. He paid the rent and bought the groceries, but never let the woman handle any money. He was a healthy, strong looking man, neat and clean in appearance. He did not drink, gamble, or have any other vicious habits. He professed to be very fond of his wife and children, and Mrs. Johnson seemed to care a great deal for him. There is no evidence that she nagged at him, but when she mentioned the children's need of shoes or clothing he seemed entirely unconcerned. During cold weather he let his wife pick up coal on the railroad tracks. Mr. Johnson was a member of the Antioch Baptist Church. Until two years before he had been an active church worker, an usher and assistant superintendent of the Sunday School, but he had lost interest and ceased attending services. Neither his wife nor his own kinsfolk could account for this change. For two years he worked

for a manufacturing company which regarded him as honest and reliable. But on Christmas, 1917, the company gave its employes a 10 per cent bonus, and after receiving this gift Mr. Johnson became impudent and shiftless and was soon discharged.

*Mrs. Johnson*, aged 31, had taken part of a college course, but about three months before graduation time her mother became very ill and she was obliged to leave college. After that Mrs. Johnson taught school for several years until she married. Since her marriage she has worked as a domestic and has been well thought of by her employers. At the time of which we write she was very much discouraged and disheartened. She seemed to be getting deeper and deeper in debt, and felt that she must undertake some night work in order to pull out at all.

*Children*.—There were two small boys, aged 7 and 3 respectively. The older boy was in the first grade of the public school. Both were fairly healthy, but not properly clothed.

*Relatives*.—Mrs. Johnson's parents were both living. Her father was employed as a street cleaner and earned \$8.00 a week. Her mother earned from \$3.00 to \$4.00 a week as laundress. A married sister, her husband and two children were living with the parents. The sister's husband was a laborer who earned \$2.00 a day. The sister was a laundress, but at this time was pregnant and unable to work. The mother was paying fifty cents a week, the cost of industrial insurance for Mrs. Johnson and the children.

Mr. Johnson's father was dead; his mother was quite old and lived with two daughters, one a widow, the other unmarried. The first did laundry work, in which she was assisted more or less by the second, who was not strong physically and appeared to be mentally defective.

*Treatment*.—It is of interest that no material relief was given to this family, but some rather important services were rendered. First of all the social worker advised Mrs. Johnson against night work and succeeded in persuading her of its unwisdom. She then talked with both husband



and wife, urging each to make known to the other the amount and conditions of their several loans. She intervened with the grocer and the various "loan sharks," arranged a new loan from one source, a reputable company, with interest at 8 per cent (actually it was a higher rate) and saw that the old debts were paid off. The new loan was for \$50, with \$4 interest deducted at the outset and weekly payments of \$1.00 to be made. High though this rate was, it was much more reasonable than the terms of the original loans. The social worker then had a rather serious talk with Mr. Johnson about his responsibilities for the family and especially his relations to his wife. He was urged to show her a little more attention, since she was really fond of him.

*Results and Outlook.*—Several months later, the loan company reported that payments had been made regularly and that the family soon would be out of debt. Both Mr. and Mrs. Johnson expressed great gratitude to the Family Welfare Society for what it had done. Mrs. Johnson said that her husband was "lovely" to her, and they both were very happy. They were glad that their home did not have to be broken up. They had talked things over and agreed not to keep anything from each other in the future. They felt that they were "just beginning to live." Perhaps they were a little over-optimistic about their own future, but the evidence is that the Johnson family will get along pretty well, unless some unforeseen misfortune befalls it. Of course, the income is small, and it would not require a very great catastrophe to involve them in new difficulties, but the present crisis seems to have been met rather successfully.

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**Poverty and Unadjustment.**—There are two rather different points of view from which we may consider the economic situation of the Capodanno and the Johnson families. The first has to do with poverty in the sense of limited purchasing power of the income. The second has to do with poverty in the sense of a discrepancy between

what these people wanted and what they could pay for. Both families were "poor" in both senses of the word, but only the Capodannos were "dependent" in the sense of requiring material aid in order to subsist.

The first sort of poverty has received widespread attention, but the second has been largely ignored. Our own interest is primarily in the second, because of its more immediate relation to personal demoralization and social disorganization. What is sometimes facetiously referred to as "a champagne taste and a beer income" is itself an instance of unadjustment. If this discrepancy between purchasing power and the price of goods desired continues, there tends to develop a chronic state of irritability or discouragement or both. Such a maladjustment had definitely occurred in the Johnson family and was rapidly developing in the Capodanno household when the visiting nurse intervened.

Between the first sort of poverty on the one hand and personal demoralization and group disorganization on the other there is no direct relation. There is no unadjustment when people accept their condition, either because they have never known anything different or because they have made up their minds to make the best of a bad situation. But there is an indirect connection between this kind of poverty and maladjustment. While "the poor" may be satisfied with their present economic status, their limited resources reduce their power to meet future crises successfully. Theirs is an unstable accommodation.

This was apparently the status of both the Capodanno and the Johnson families in the earlier years of their married life. But when they came to the attention of social agencies they were experiencing the maladjustments involved in the second type of poverty. They were pushed off the level of living which they had formerly occupied and at the same time they had probably caught sight of a still "higher" level than any they had ever enjoyed. The most plausible explanation of Mr. Johnson's conduct that occurs to us is that he had a glimpse of the pleasures he might enjoy by spending his money on himself instead



of for his family. Mr. Capodanno, too, as a result of his migration to America, had become acquainted with standards of living little dreamed of in southern Italy. Now the combination of a rising standard and a falling plane of living could hardly fail to create irritation and discouragement. When one wants more and more, but gets less and less he is headed for maladjustment and demoralization.

Yet neither family was wholly demoralized yet. Perhaps this term could be applied to Mrs. Capodanno and to Mr. Johnson, but certainly not to their respective spouses. Mr. Capodanno was doing his best to "carry on" alone and had asked no one for help. Mrs. Johnson attempted to find a solution for her difficulties in employment at night. That this would undoubtedly have proven a disappointing failure in no wise invalidates the statement that her morale was good; she was able to direct her attention and her energy to the making of new adjustments.

With this preliminary discussion in mind let us turn to a representative definition of poverty. An economist has given us the following statement.<sup>3</sup> "Viewed objectively and in the last analysis, poverty is an adverse relation between the flow of money income and the power to buy goods and services considered necessities of life in a given locality at a given time." This definition compels us to revise our initial statement. What we described as poverty of the second type is not ordinarily called by that name unless the standard in accordance with which the person or family finds it impossible to live is no higher than that of the larger group of which he or it may be a part. That is to say, when someone with an income of \$10,000 a year is very unhappy because he cannot spend \$25,000, we do not describe his status as one of poverty although he is obviously unadjusted. But we do apply the term poverty when a family with \$800 a year worries because it does not have the things which \$1,500 would buy. Miss Peixotto's definition also calls our attention to an unmentioned aspect of what we described as poverty of the first

<sup>3</sup> Peixotto, Jessica B., *Control of Poverty*, p. 10.

type. It is that we must consider not merely nominal income, but also the cost of goods and services desired. The Germans since the War have had no difficulty in appreciating this point. Finally, Miss Peixotto's definition reminds us that the state of the arts, current accumulation of wealth, custom, spending habits of the group, especially the spending habits of those who set the pace, controlling ideas about social classes—all these and other social factors influence in varying degree the manner of living of every social group and determine what the group will consider essential to the maintenance of its standards.

All of this compels us to recognize that poverty is a relative term. There is no short and easy way of determining whether it is present in a given instance or of measuring its extent. However, there is a method by which we can make headway on both of these problems. It involves the discovery of what large numbers of people in a given social group consider the minimum of goods and services without which they would not be satisfied to live (standard of living). It involves further the determination of whether a given person or family has access to this minimum and how many people must get along with less (relation of cost of living to income). But not even such careful research as this method implies can give us exact results, for it has been found impossible to agree as to what constitutes the standard of any given group. Hence we cannot tell how many people are unadjusted because of a discrepancy between their income and the cost of maintaining the standard which they share with their group. However, the method which we are about to describe does afford useful clues to the number of people who are either unadjusted or likely to become so by reason of limited income.

**Standards of Living.**—Standards of living obviously include a great many items which would be exceedingly difficult to measure, but it is helpful to reduce them so far as possible to quantitative terms. As a matter of fact, a considerable degree of success has already been achieved by a number of research bodies which have reduced at least



the most tangible elements of a standard of living to objective statements. Some of these statements are in terms of a plane of living which merely keeps body and soul together. Some are based on mere animal existence, allowing little for the needs of men as social creatures. Others are what might be called "health and comfort standards" and still others might be designated as "standards of luxury."

Some of the most definite statements of a minimum standard of living are the quantity budgets worked out by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, Bureau of Applied Economics, National Industrial Conference Board and similar groups.<sup>4</sup> Most of these are modifications of, or influenced by, the quantity budget of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The general procedure in working out such a quantity budget is approximately as follows. From Census data the average American family was discovered to be about five persons.<sup>5</sup> For statistical purposes these were standardized as husband, wife, girl aged 6, boy aged 12, and boy aged 2. On the basis of food consumption, these five are counted as the equivalent of 3.35 adult males. The amounts of various articles needed by a family of this size were estimated after careful study of accounts kept for one year by a large number of families under the direction of the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The quantity food budget was based on the accounts of 280 families selected because they approximated the standard size and because they purchased about 3,500 calories per "man" per day. They were equally distributed over eleven representative cities. The averages secured were altered slightly to conform to dietitians' notions as to a proper balance of proteins, fats and carbohydrates. The final statement is in terms of definite quantities of specific articles of food which could easily be priced in any community at any time.

<sup>4</sup> Comish, N. H., *The Standard of Living*, Chap. VI; Epstein, A., *Facing Old Age*, Chap. VI; Mon. Lab. Rev. 10: 1-18; Bur. of Appl. Econ., Bul. No. 7; Nat. Ind. Conf. Bd., Research Report, No. 41.

<sup>5</sup> The validity of this assumption is being seriously questioned. See, e.g., Douglas, Paul H., in Jour. Amer. Stat. Ass'n, 19: 314-328.

The method of working out a clothing budget was very similar. The accounts of 850 families having three children under 15 years of age were analyzed carefully and criticized by clothing experts all over the country. The quantities listed in the budget are the annual replacements and not the number of garments possessed at any one time. It was assumed that a considerable amount of sewing would be done at home and some allowance was made for individual tastes and variations in climate. Account was taken not merely of physical needs, of warmth, cleanliness and comfort, but to a certain extent of appearance and style, since clothing must yield mental as well as physical satisfactions. While this is a "health and decency" budget, it is plain that it is a minimum, when we realize that no allowance has been made for the woman to have an afternoon dress of silk, a silk petticoat or silk stockings.

In similar manner the Bureau of Labor Statistics arrived at a housing standard, including one room per person, not counting the bath, a floor space of 660 square feet, at least one outside window for every room, inside bath and toilet, location in a neighborhood with reasonably well maintained streets and fairly accessible to transportation, playgrounds and places of amusement. For up-keep and renewal of furniture and furnishings it was estimated that about 7 per cent of the total cost of purchase should be allowed. This figure is of course of no use in determining a quantity standard, but is merely a guide to the amount which should be allowed in a cost budget.

Other items in the complete budget include laundry, cleaning supplies, medical and dental services, life and fire insurance, carfare, amusements and recreation, newspapers, organizations, telephone, stationery and incidentals. The necessary amount of some of these items was very difficult to estimate, but when the quantity budget was priced in the District of Columbia it was found that almost 85 per cent of the total cost was made up of items for which a definite quantity had been expressed.

Before stating the costs of such a standard budget at varying times and places, it is important to emphasize the



fact that the budget is based on the actual expenditures of large numbers of families of wage earners; that it includes on the whole only such items as would be generally agreed to be necessary and omits a great many items which many people feel should be included. In other words, this is a *minimum* budget and any additions which might be made to it would of course correspondingly increase the cost. In the various cost-of-living studies which have been made in the past few years, the totals vary considerably with time and place.<sup>6</sup> The National Industrial Conference Board in 1919 arrived at a total of \$1,268 as the cost of living on the lowest "human" level in Fall River, Massachusetts. The cost of what was termed an "American" standard was \$1,574. Professor Ogburn, studying two coal-mining communities in 1920, found the cost of living to be \$2,144. The Bureau of Labor Statistics in 1919 priced its own budget in Washington, D. C. at \$2,260. The Labor Bureau, Incorporated, in 1921, found the cost of a slightly different budget to be \$2,338 in Philadelphia. While these figures vary a good deal from time to time and place to place, we seem to be justified in stating that \$1,500 is a minimum below which a family of five cannot be maintained without the constant danger of serious maladjustment.

**Incomes in the United States.**—Having thus arrived at an admittedly very conservative estimate of the cost of living on a very modest plane it is interesting to examine the data we have concerning incomes received in the United States. In 1918, a year of unusually high earnings, the median income, not counting soldiers and sailors, was found to be \$1,140.<sup>7</sup> This means that one-half of all income receivers not only did not get \$1,500, but received less than \$1,140. One-fourth received less than \$833, and only one-fourth received \$1,574, or more. This, of course, does not determine the amount of family incomes because there is frequently more than one wage earner in the same house-

<sup>6</sup> Bureau of Applied Economics, Bul. No. 7, *Standards of Living*; Epstein, *op. cit.*, Chap. VI; U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. No. 357, *Cost of Living in the United States*.

<sup>7</sup> National Bureau of Economic Research, Vol. 1, *Income in the United States*.

hold. But a study of 12,000 wage-earning families who kept accounts for one year in 1918 or 1919 shows that about 90 per cent of the family income consisted of the husband's earnings.<sup>8</sup> In 1919 the Bureau of Labor Statistics studied the wages and hours of approximately 320,000 men and 85,000 women in forty-three states, 2,365 establishments and 780 occupations.<sup>9</sup> It was found that full-time employment at the average rate of earnings per hour would give a man a weekly wage of \$25.60, a woman \$13.55. At this same rate, which almost certainly would not be maintained because of various interruptions to employment, the yearly wage would be for men, \$1,230, for women, \$704. Assuming that the husband's contribution to the family income was 90 per cent, the total family income would average \$1,382, provided there was no unemployment, strike, sickness, accident or other interruption. The appropriate deductions for these various losses of time are difficult to make, but there is little doubt that they would reduce the average family income to an amount little if any greater than the median personal income, \$1,140, calculated by the National Bureau of Economic Research. The reasonableness of this estimate is further supported by the fact that the National Bureau of Economic Research included not only wage earners, but persons in the highest income classes. If, then, \$1,500 represents roughly the minimum cost of living on a level acceptable to most American citizens, and \$1,200 represents roughly the average family income of wage earners, the conclusions should not be difficult to deduce. There is evidently a tremendous amount of social unadjustment bound up with poverty.

**Why There is so Much Poverty.**—There are two major problems involved in studying the causes of poverty. One requires an explanation for the *total volume* of poverty, the other an explanation of why *particular persons* are living below a standard acceptable to the group of which they are members. For the moment we shall limit ourselves to the first consideration. Even in dealing with it, we shall

<sup>8</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. No. 357, p. 4.

<sup>9</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. No. 265.



have to limit ourselves to little more than an enumeration of causal factors, some of which will be discussed more fully in subsequent chapters. First among the causes is an unfavorable ratio of working population to the productive resources of the country. If there is an excessive population, poverty is inevitable for large numbers. But an appropriate population for a given country is not easy to calculate because consideration must be given not merely to natural resources in raw materials, but also to organization and management of industry, techniques of production, the skill and attitudes of workers, etc. The ratio of population to means of subsistence is also affected by migration. Even if the ratio of population to productive resources is favorable, it does not allow a sufficient margin to prevent large numbers falling below the poverty line so long as the distribution of incomes is as inequitable as it is in our present economic system.

But probably one of the most important causes of poverty is the waste in production. A committee of the Federated American Engineering Societies made in 1921 an elaborate report on waste in industry.<sup>10</sup> It took as its standard of judgment not some abstract idea, but the best practices actually discovered in various industries. The committee found the ratio of efficiency of the average plant to that of the best to range from 2:3 in textiles to 2:9 in the metal trades. The responsibility for waste was assayed against management, labor, and outside contacts. The degree of responsibility charged against management ranged from 50 per cent in textiles to 81 per cent in the metal trades; that against labor from 9 per cent in the metal trades to 28 per cent in printing, and that against the public trade relationships and other factors from 9 per cent in men's clothing to 40 per cent in textiles. On the whole, the report of this committee makes it plain that wastes in production are traceable primarily to inefficient management and only secondarily to labor. As a sample of industrial wastes, Gilbert and Pogue figured the losses of commodity values wasted in the smoke given off in the firing

<sup>10</sup> Fed. Amer. Eng. Soc., *Waste in Industry*.

of raw coal and the damage wrought by coal smudge on the basis of normal values in 1915 at \$1,000,000,000 per year. To this they added another \$1,000,000,000, charged to needless transportation.<sup>11</sup>

In addition to wastes in production, there are wastes in marketing which have only been suggested in the case of coal. There are cross freights, an excessive number of middlemen, poor storage facilities, inadequate transportation, goods allowed to spoil on farms, in transit and in storage, ignorance of where to sell and where to buy. And then there are wastes in consumption. Buyers are ignorant or do not have access to suitable stores. The rapid changes of fashion, constant advertising and the development of salesmanship induce people to purchase many things which they could well dispense with. Having purchased food, clothing, etc., many people do not know how to utilize these goods. It has been estimated that Americans throw away \$70,000,000 worth of food each year. If only one ounce of food were wasted or spoiled in each home, the total loss would be 1,300,000 pounds a day.<sup>12</sup> This carelessness with reference to food is merely an example of a typical American attitude and practice which is an important factor in the causation of poverty.

Another causal factor which is at once economic and social is the dominance of the profit motive in industry. It has led and is leading to the ruin of natural resources, the hypertrophy of sales organization and advertising, the manufacture of shoddy goods and adulteration, the supply of unnecessary and pernicious commodities and services. It is both cause and effect of the popular approval of the accumulation of money rather than the production of goods and the serving of people. Closely related to the pursuit of profits is the destructiveness of war which is not traceable entirely to economic causes, but is so intimately bound up with them that it must be mentioned in this connection.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Survey, 51: 559.

<sup>12</sup> Comish, *op. cit.*, pp. 59-60.

<sup>13</sup> Page, Kirby, *War, Its Causes, Consequences and Cure*; Thomas, Norman, *The Challenge of War, An Economic Interpretation*; Fisher, Irving, *America's Interest in World Peace*.



While no exact figures are available, it is obvious that the destruction of property and of lives of able-bodied workmen represents in modern civilization one of the very greatest of all the causes of poverty.

**Why Some People Have Low Incomes.**—We have indicated some of the reasons for the extent of poverty in the nation. The factors which we are about to mention are also obstacles to the national production of wealth, but more immediately they help to account for the experiencing of poverty by particular individuals and groups. There are numerous personal factors which play a large part in determining the fact that in our economic system certain people have lower incomes than others. There is first of all the degree of native intelligence. Some people are from birth more keen witted than others and unless handicapped in some other fashion, are likely to earn more money and accumulate more material goods. Within certain limits general education also affects one's earning power. At least the same man is likely to earn less without adequate schooling than he would if he availed himself of the educational resources of the community. Perhaps even more immediately significant than general education is vocational training. And then there is the matter of physical health, vigor, sight, hearing, etc. Mental health, too, is of tremendous importance; and closely bound up with all of these, perhaps including them, is one's personality. The workman who is level headed, even tempered, alert, observing, eager to get ahead, having regular habits, free from alcoholism, able to work well with other people, with wishes well balanced and equitably satisfied—such a man will, other things being equal, make much more headway in the economic struggle than one with the opposite traits.

Beside the personal factors there are others which we may denominate economic and which play a large part in determining the rate of wages which will be paid in a given industry or occupation. These have been so admirably stated by Hamilton and May<sup>14</sup> that we take the liberty of quoting their summary.

<sup>14</sup> Hamilton, W., and May, S., *The Control of Wages*, p. 107.

- I. The laborer's real wage. The size of this depends upon
  1. The nominal rate of wages. This, in turn, rests upon
    - A. The position of the industry or occupation as regards
      - a. The prices of its products, the costs of its raw materials, and the sizes of the incomes which go to the owners, to the management, and to others who have claims upon it.
      - b. The current state of "the industrial arts," with respect to labor, management, technique, industrial equipment, and the organization of the plant.
      - c. The current state of "the economic arts" which consists of a large number of conventions and arrangements. Typical of these are the guidance of industry by business, the organization of an industry as a number of competing concerns, the placing of "the wages bill" against separate establishments rather than against the industry as a whole, and the absence of any competent research staff for the conscious development of a less wasteful organization for industry.
    - B. The ability of wage-earners to discover and to appropriate income in competition with other groups who would possess it.
  2. The purchasing power of the nominal wage over the goods and services which make up the laborer's budget.
- II. The "free income" of services which fall to the lot of the laborer as an employee in industry or as a member of "the political order."

**Some Consequences of Being "Poor."**—In the study of poverty we find various factors so inextricably interwoven that it is well-nigh impossible to say which is cause and which effect. Indeed, the same factor is often both cause and effect. But even so, we will find it profitable to view some of these factors from the standpoint of results.

Being undernourished, the poor lack energy, physical, intellectual and moral. Whatever the original cause of their poverty, they cannot, being poor, work so hard, think so clearly, plan so hopefully, or resist temptation with so much steadfastness as those who have the primary means of keeping themselves in sound condition.

Moreover, the lack of adequate food, clothing and housing commonly implies other lacks, among which are poor early training and education, the absence of contact with elevating and inspiring personalities, a narrow outlook upon the world, and, in short, a general lack of social opportunity.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Cooley, C. H., *Social Organization*, p. 290.



But we do not have to content ourselves with general statements like this. A number of statistical studies enable us to determine at least with the beginning of accuracy the correlation of poverty and of numerous conditions involving health, education, recreation, etc. A study of 1,000 North Carolina farmers in 1922 showed some striking facts concerning the tenants and "croppers" who are known to be on a much lower economic level than farm owners.<sup>16</sup>

No matter how much disagreement there may be among persons as to the cause of tenancy, the effects are too clear to dispute. This is just as true of the social effects as it is of the economic effects. The landless families live in poorer health, lose more of their children by death than the owners do. They are more illiterate, fail to reach as high grades in school, take less papers and magazines, have fewer books in their homes, attend church and Sunday-school less, have fewer home amusements, attend community affairs less often.

The correlation of poverty with sickness and death rates has been worked out in a number of different situations. We shall offer as an example the findings of the Federal Children's Bureau in its study of infant mortality in Baltimore in 1915.

INFANT MORTALITY RATES, BY EARNINGS OF FATHER AND COLOR AND NATIONALITY OF MOTHER.

*Live Births in Baltimore in 1915* <sup>17</sup>

Infant Mortality Rate.<sup>18</sup>

Earnings of father.	Native white mothers.	Foreign- born	
		white mothers.	Colored mothers.
Total .....	95.9	95.9	158.6
Under \$450 .....	164.8	144.6	163.7
\$450-\$549 .....	128.9	62.4	168.5
\$550-\$649 .....	107.9	100.2	138.2
\$650-\$849 .....	95.6	93.0	115.7
\$850-\$1,249 .....	69.9	61.1	.....
\$1,250-\$1,849 .....	84.3	46.7	.....
\$1,850 and over.....	38.3	.....	.....

<sup>16</sup> Taylor, C. C., and Zimmerman, C. C., *Economic and Social Conditions of North Carolina Farmers*, p. 6.

<sup>17</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 119, pp. 94-97.

<sup>18</sup> Not shown where base is less than 100.

It thus appears that the infant mortality rate varies *inversely* as the income except for some irregularities in the case of foreign-born mothers. The Children's Bureau discovered further that the same thing was approximately true for the various causes of death. With very few exceptions, the highest mortality rate from each separate cause was found in the lowest income group.

Another apparent consequence of low income is retarded and limited physical development of children. An English study offers a sample of the evidence in support of this statement.

#### STATURE OF LIVERPOOL SCHOOL BOYS <sup>19</sup>

Class of school	Height in inches of boys aged		
	7	11	14
Higher grade schools; sons of wealthy citizens .....	47.4	55.5	61.7
Council schools; sons of well-to-do citizens .....	45.3	53.1	58.2
Council schools; sons of laboring classes .....	44.8	51.8	56.2
Council schools; sons of unemployed or casual laborers	44.0	49.7	55.2

The limited schooling of children of fathers whose earnings are low is another measurable concomitant of poverty. The following statistical table is based on a study made by the Children's Bureau in a coal-mining district.

#### GRADE COMPLETED BY CHILDREN WHO HAD LEFT SCHOOL <sup>20</sup>

*Per Cent Reporting Specified Grade Completed*

Earnings of father	Second and under	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth and over
Total per cent ..	1.5	6.0	15.2	18.7	27.1	14.1	17.4
No earnings, or less than \$850 .....	2.7	6.5	18.0	19.7	27.9	11.6	13.6
\$850, less than \$1,250 .....	1.0	5.7	14.2	19.7	31.2	13.7	14.5
\$1,250, less than \$1,850 .....	1.5	4.4	12.1	13.3	23.6	20.4	24.8

<sup>19</sup> Vernon, H. M., *Industrial Fatigue and Efficiency*, p. 165.

<sup>20</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 106, p. 44.



One other handicap of the "poor" which we shall mention here is the denial of justice. Statistics from the Boston Legal Aid Society <sup>21</sup> for 1916 and 1917 show that of 551 cases which could not be settled out of court, which were meritorious and required court action, 386 were taken to court and won, 36 were taken and lost and 129 could not be brought before the courts because of the client's inability to pay the costs. In other words, the fees required by the state caused a total failure of justice to 23 per cent of these persons who needed to invoke the aid of the machinery of justice. In addition to court costs and fees, there is the expense of counsel and there are innumerable delays, which are easily secured by those with sufficient means, and which frequently work great hardships upon the poor. "The administration of American justice is not impartial, the rich and the poor do not stand on an equality before the law, the traditional method of providing justice has operated to close the doors of the court, and has caused a gross denial of justice in all parts of the country to millions of persons." <sup>22</sup>

All of these relatively tangible and measurable consequences of poverty imply, if not oppression, at least repression. In our modern industrial society it costs money to satisfy the fundamental wishes of a normal human being. Security is out of reach of men who are at the mercy of autocratic employers, hard-hearted landlords and loan-sharks, as well as of the more impersonal forces involved in the business cycle, over-population and international conflict. New experience is denied to most men in their monotonous daily routine, and without adequate incomes wholesome recreation is hard to find. Social status and recognition of personal merit have little place in the corporation whose workmen are known by numbers instead of their names. "Response" and all the joys of home life are not to be obtained unless one has the price. Uncertainty of tenure, dull routine and indifference to one's personality are found so generally with poverty that they

<sup>21</sup> Smith, R. H., *Justice and the Poor*, p. 28.

<sup>22</sup> Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

constitute a joint menace to morale and wholesome life organization.

**Meeting Economic Crises of Individuals and Families.**

—When a person finds himself in financial difficulty there are several resources to which he may turn providing they have not been previously exhausted. He may borrow money from an individual or a bank. If he has a life insurance policy or building and loan stock he may use either of these as security. He may ask for store credit, may pawn his watch or ring, may turn to a loan shark who will remove his immediate need, but get him into greater difficulties later on, or he may in some cities turn to what is known as a remedial loan association or a Morris Plan Bank. If he is a member of a trade union or a fraternal order he may receive a benefit on account of sickness, accident, death or unemployment. He may possibly have other insurance against these misfortunes. But for the great mass of the people the resources we have named are not uniformly available. Most people do manage to get through ordinary economic crises somehow or other by the exercise of their own initiative and ingenuity, but if the trouble lasts for any considerable length of time or is one of a series of calamities, credit becomes exhausted, insurance is not kept up and one presently comes to the end of his resources.

It is at this point that social case-working agencies usually come in contact with an individual or family. From the standpoint of effecting adequate accommodations it is probably unfortunate that their services are not made available long before the difficulty has become chronic. But for this there are reasons which take us back into the history of social work and the continuing attitudes of people toward it. Because it is looked upon as a form of patronage, most people turn to the social work organization only as a last resort. However, the methods of social agencies are changing at an increasing rate and attitudes toward them are being modified slowly. There was a time when there was little but indiscriminate relief given to all who asked. As a reaction against this, came an era of niggardly relief,



followed in the latter part of the nineteenth century by relief-giving with a plan, and only recently by personal service in which relief plays about the same part that drugs play in the practice of medicine. Social case work, as we have come to call it, has developed principally in the agencies we now know as family welfare societies; but it is also coming to be the accepted technique of public welfare departments, employment bureaus, industrial accident commissions, hospitals, dispensaries and child-caring societies. In all these we find not only a development of skill, but a growing professional attitude and a placing of material relief in its proper relation to other factors in personal and family reorganization.

**Can Poverty Be Abolished?**—It has long been plain that mere relief-giving will never solve the problems of people with low incomes; not even relief-giving as a phase of the best social case work will accomplish the elimination of poverty, except in individual instances. It seems to us that a program to abolish poverty must include four elements, (1) an increase in nominal wages, (2) a reduction in prices, (3) an accommodation between group standards and the resources that are or may become available, (4) personal work with unadjusted individuals.

Hamilton and May<sup>23</sup> suggest that nominal wages may be increased through the control of three sets of factors, (*a*) pecuniary, (*b*) technical, and (*c*) economic. By the pecuniary factors are meant, for example, the direct raising of wages and adding the increase to the price of the goods produced. This, however, would be very likely to come back upon the laborers eventually in the form of an increased cost of living. Another source of an increment in wages is the possible deduction from dividends and profits. It too has very definite limitations.

By technical factors are meant the increased efficiency of labor and of management, development of the technique of industry, improved tools and machines and other equipment, and improved organization. The increased efficiency of labor involves health, training, placement and morale.

<sup>23</sup> Hamilton and May, *op. cit.*, Chap. IV.

The increased efficiency of management depends upon higher standards of competence, eliminating considerations of kinship and friendship in selecting the personnel of management and enlisting the services of the manager in the real work of industry, which is production and not profit making. The improvement in industrial technique contains enormous possibilities. Gifford Pinchot <sup>24</sup> has said that "from the power field perhaps more than from any other quarter we can expect in the near future the most substantial aid in raising the standard of living, in eliminating the physical drudgery of life, and in winning the age-long struggle against poverty."

The economic factors which affect the nominal wage include the business cycle and the corporate surplus. Control of these will make possible the payment of higher wages. Another probable source of increased wage rates is the reorganization of the marketing system. It is possible that complete unification of an industry would provide a source of higher wages, but this has yet to be demonstrated. Perhaps most important of all the economic factors is the institution of collective bargaining and the increased participation of workers in the management of industry. For even though technical efficiency be achieved, the advantage is likely to accrue to the investing classes unless the laborers are organized to secure their share. Trade unionism, therefore, seems quite fundamental in any present-day movement to control poverty.

To the three groups of factors named by Hamilton and May, we might add another, namely, political factors. A growing number of states have enacted laws creating minimum wage commissions for women and children. There are also laws which assist the workers by specifying the manner and frequency of paying wages, forbidding employers to force patronage of company stores and facilitating the collection of wages when employers are delinquent in payment.

It would be futile to raise the nominal rate of wages if the cost of living increased correspondingly. Hence it

<sup>24</sup> Pinchot, Gifford, in *Survey*, 51:561.



is quite as important to keep prices down as to keep wages up. Poverty is not a matter of the absolute level of either wages or prices, but of the ratio between the two. Probably the most important means of lowering prices is to increase production. During the War it was demonstrated that a 20 per cent <sup>25</sup> increase in productive output was possible. If such a rate of production were continued, "the law of supply and demand" would mean inevitably lower prices to the consumers. If then production were directed into appropriate channels instead of being cut off, the ultimate result would not be a business depression, but an increase in the total quantity of goods produced and used by the people. Another important means of price reduction has been demonstrated by the consumers' co-operative movement. We cannot enter into a description of this at the present time, but the extended experience of the British cooperatives seems quite conclusive on this point. Still other programs for lowering the cost of living, as well as for effecting more far-reaching economic and social changes, are price fixing, the "single tax," public ownership, guild socialism and the restriction of population. Limitations of time and space forbid that we should enter upon a discussion of these programs now. Suffice it to say that each of these schemes offers some prospect of reducing prices and thereby increasing real wages.

**Social Factors Involved in the Control of Poverty.**—As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, poverty itself is not merely a matter of income and the cost of consumers' goods. It is also a matter of individual and group standards of living. Hence the control of poverty calls for an accommodation between the standards of the individual and those of his group; it calls for an accommodation between standards and the resources that are or may presently become available. This means not merely living within one's income (a personal problem) and the conservation of natural resources (a group problem), but the capacity (both individual and social) to find satisfaction of basic

<sup>25</sup> Friday, David, *Profits, Wages and Prices*, pp. 237-8.

wishes and desires in the goods and services that are within reach.

This accommodation between standards and resources involves a modification of social attitudes, folkways, mores and public opinion. It would mean, for example, rating a man with reference to his whole personality instead of according to his material possessions alone. It would place the stamp of approval upon service rather than upon profits. It would encourage the purchase of articles because of their serviceableness and their beauty rather than because they are "all the rage." But it is not easy to see how such thorough-going changes in public sentiment are to be brought about. Perhaps some control of advertising would help, for there is little doubt that much unrest is a product of the constant stimulation from show window and fashion sheet. Perhaps a demonstration of "the simple life" by persons with considerable prestige would lessen the desire for conspicuous consumption. Probably any program for such modification of social attitudes could be stated in terms of education; but it is by no means plain what would be the methods and the content of that education.

#### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write an account of your own experiences so far as the relation between your income and the cost of satisfying your desires is concerned. Describe especially situations in which you have been dissatisfied. What sort of adjustments did you make? Did they involve increased income, lowered cost of living or altered standards? Were the standards changed for your whole group? Did you become a member of another group with different standards?
2. Secure copy of a standard quantity budget and price it in your home community. Obtain from employers, trade unions or other sources data concerning wages actually received in a year in your community. Compare earnings with cost of living. Note expressions of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the economic situation.
3. Assemble statistics from nearby social agencies showing correlation of poverty with other economic, social and personal factors.



4. Observe carefully wastes in production, marketing and consumption in your home district.
5. Make a spot map showing for a given area the location of persons and families served by a visiting nurse association, juvenile court and family welfare society. Is there any tendency for the spots to appear in clusters? What reasons can you discover for this? What does this indicate as to the possible correlation of poverty with sickness, delinquency and family disorganization?
6. Enumerate and describe the resources in your community for use in time of economic crisis. Include, *e.g.*, savings bank accounts, insurance policies, building and loan stock, pawn shops, store credit, trade union and fraternal order benefits, remedial loan associations.
7. Visit a family welfare society and report on:
  - a. Organization—secure constitution and draw a chart
  - b. Personnel—board, executive, paid and volunteer workers
  - c. Equipment—office, furnishings
  - d. Filing and record systems
  - e. Methods of diagnosis and treatment
  - f. Statistics concerning clients
8. Visit and make similar report on a public agency such as a county relief office or public welfare department.
9. Find out what trade unions have done and are doing to reduce poverty in your community and state.
10. Study the platforms and other literature of the Socialist party to see how it proposes to meet the problems of poverty.
11. Make a similar study of the literature advocating the "single tax."
12. Visit a cooperative store and report on:
  - a. Plan of organization and administration
  - b. Personnel
  - c. Equipment
  - d. Goods handled, where purchased
  - e. Amount of business done
  - f. Relation to other cooperative institutions

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## CHAPTER XIII

### IRREGULAR WORK

#### MR. ALLEN—A CARPENTER

One March, *not* in a year of general business depression, Mrs. Allen asked a day nursery to care for her four children while she sought employment. Her husband had been out of work nearly all winter and the family's resources were about exhausted. They were living in a poorly lighted basement apartment of four rooms. They were buying furniture on the installment plan and owed the grocer \$160. They had traded with him a long time and he had never refused them credit. However, they had no milk even for the baby.

*Mr. Allen*, a "strapping big man," was a carpenter by trade, earned good wages when he had employment, but always lost more or less time in the winter. Usually their savings combined with credit at the grocery tided them over until spring. Being a union man, Mr. Allen quite consistently objected to taking work outside his own line or to working for less than the standard rate. However, he did accept temporary employment and was very loath to apply for financial assistance. Although a man of limited education, his ability was good and his habits of industry and self-reliance were unquestioned. His troubles were traceable to "seasonal industry" rather than to "character defects."

*Mrs. Allen* was an optimist. She laughed a great deal and impressed the social worker as a "good hearted, honest woman who was trying to make the best of a bad luck situation." Mrs. Allen formerly worked in an overall factory and presently returned to her old job.



*Children.*—There were four children ranging from one to six years in age. The oldest was in kindergarten. All, of course, required a great deal of personal care.

When the social case worker first visited the Allens she left them milk tickets. She suggested that if Mrs. Allen went to work she make it only a temporary plan and that she leave the children at a nearby day nursery. Mrs. Allen and her sister did go to work in the overall factory, but left the children with a neighbor. Meanwhile the landlord's little boy, who was known to be a sex offender, made trouble. Mrs. Allen continued her factory work through the summer, providing for the children's care by having another sister, a widow with no children, come to live with them.

The earnings of both Mr. and Mrs. Allen would have carried them through the following winter, had not Mr. Allen been a victim of influenza. His illness consumed their savings and in December they had to ask for help. Groceries, milk and fuel were provided by the Family Welfare Society. After his recovery, Mr. Allen went to another state in search of employment, but failing to find work returned within a few days. Their problems were complicated this winter by Mrs. Allen's fifth pregnancy and the purchase sometime in the fall of an automobile. This was to cost \$100, and \$30 was still due on it. How they came to make this ill-advised purchase we do not know, but Mr. Allen blamed his wife and said he "raised the devil when she did it." He asked help in selling the car. Again the Family Welfare Society provided groceries and coal while the visitor assisted Mr. Allen to find work.

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It is interesting to compare the situation of Mr. Allen with that of Mr. Burke.<sup>1</sup> Both were reasonably well adjusted to the status of seasonal laborers. They apparently would have been glad to work all the year if they could, but accepted the fact that they could not. If we should consider only the case of Mr. Burke, we might conclude

<sup>1</sup> Chapter X.

that there is no particular economic or social hazard in seasonal trades. But when we turn to the situation of Mr. Allen, we realize that irregular work means few resources with which to meet crises such as his extended illness and his wife's pregnancy.

**Types of Irregularities of Employment.**—There are several sorts of irregularities of employment which it is important to distinguish. First, there is the disturbance of employment due to business depressions; this we shall consider in some detail in the next chapter. Second, there is seasonal irregularity, like that of Mr. Allen and Mr. Burke. Third, there is the daily and weekly irregularity, like that of the longshoremen. Fourth, there is what is known as labor turnover, the changing of jobs, not because there is no work, but because there is dissatisfaction either on the part of employer or employe. Fifth, there is the irregularity of the man who works at odd jobs. In this chapter we shall pay little attention to the last type, because his difficulties are only incidentally economic. He may be sick, or crippled, or feeble-minded or advanced in years. He is more accurately described as "unemployable" than as "unemployed."

Seasonal variations in employment have long been common in the building trades. In the northern and eastern states carpenters, painters and bricklayers may expect a slack period every year. However, something is being accomplished toward securing more regular employment in these trades, so that their seasonal variations are by no means as great as in some other fields.

Almost nothing has been accomplished toward the decentralization of agricultural labor. The story of Burke, told in Chapter X, is typical of a large body of men who "make" the wheat harvest. In a recent investigation<sup>2</sup> it was found that on an average men spend twenty-six days in the harvest area, working fifteen days and losing eleven. Coming from all directions, these men are usually guided only by whims, chance or guess work. They tend to become congested in some places, leaving other localities short of

<sup>2</sup> Lescohier, D. D., *Harvest Labor Problems in the Wheat Belt*.



help. Most of those attracted to a community for harvesting are discharged as soon as this task is completed and move on to other localities. Consequently when threshing starts it is necessary to obtain a fresh supply of workmen. Even those who live in the wheat belt must often incur heavy traveling expenses. Thousands ride the freights or the "blind baggage." Traveling in this way they are apt to be directed by chances to ride, rather than by known opportunities of employment.

A vivid picture of the casual laborer is presented in the following brief summaries from the record cards of seven typical floating laborers who applied for work at an employment office in Milwaukee.<sup>3</sup>

1. Patrick J. Flynn, 87 jobs during 23 months and 6 days, or one job in every 8 days.
2. Jos. Stein, 7 jobs during 5 months and 4 days, or one job in every 22 days.
3. Frank O'Neill, 16 jobs during 10 months and 4 days, or one job in every 19 days.
4. Matt Brewer, 20 jobs during 10 months and 19 days, or one job in every 16 days.
5. Chas. Sommer, 72 jobs during 10 months and 19 days, or one job in every 4½ days.
6. Fred Miller, 59 jobs during 6 months and 8 days, or one job in every 3½ days.
7. William Thompson, 34 jobs during 12 months and 14 days, or one job in every 11 days.

Longshoremen are a group of workers whose irregularity is not seasonal but from week to week, day to day and hour to hour. The difficulties of a longshoreman, even when he is sober and industrious, are illustrated by the story of a young Englishman in New York.<sup>4</sup> This man was about 26 years old at the time a study was made of his employment. At the age of 12 he had found it necessary to go to work because of his father's death. After a short time in a mill he shipped as a sailor and by the time he was 20 he had become quartermaster. After a time he

<sup>3</sup> Brissenden, P. F., and Frankel, Emil, *Labor Turn-Over in Industry*, pp. 133-134.

<sup>4</sup> Barnes, C. B., *The Longshoreman*, pp. 70, 84-85.

married, left the sea and became a longshoreman in New York. Being a steady and methodical man he, of his own accord, kept a daily account of his hours and earnings so that his wife might know how much she could afford to spend for their daily living. This account shows that in the 86 weeks from May, 1909, to January, 1911, this longshoreman earned a little over \$900.00. This was an average of \$10.57 per week. In 15 weeks, which were not consecutive, he had no work at all. His hours of employment were exceedingly irregular. Out of 602 days he had no work at all on 298. On 73 days his time was 5 hours or less, but there were 53 days on which he worked from 13 to 22 hours. This combination of unemployment on the one hand and over-work on the other is typical of what happens to a great many casual laborers.

Other industries in which employment is regularly irregular are coal-mining, lumbering, canning, clothing manufacture, and millinery. In these and numerous other lines there is an enormous amount of unadjustment growing out of seasonal variations, temporary shutdowns and layoffs throughout the year and a high labor turnover. Now a certain degree of labor mobility is "normal." A certain amount of shifting from job to job and city to city is to be expected. It may even be desirable in order that men may freely seek to better their economic status and in order that our whole industrial system may be reasonably flexible. But excessive mobility is unnecessary and leads to serious maladjustments.

To the individual workmen changing of jobs may mean either gain or loss. In prosperity when opportunities for work are fairly numerous and attractive, change of employment may represent actual gain and, at the worst, a period of employment between jobs is likely to be relatively short; but in periods of depression the leaving of a job is much more serious. To the individual employers in different industries casual labor has quite different meanings. The farmer accepts it as an inevitable part of the system, even though he complains vigorously against the kind of help he gets. Coal operators likewise seem to consider irregular



employment as foreordained, although they too find fault with the kind of workmen they get under such conditions. But the owners and managers of factories more generally regard a high labor turnover as a serious obstacle to efficient and continuous operation. They are very much concerned about the expense of hiring and firing, of training new workers and maintaining satisfactory morale. To get more light on these problems, Brissenden and Frankel made a study of the labor turnover in a number of manufacturing establishments from 1910 to 1919. Eight factories whose aggregate number of workers, between 1912 and 1919, amounted to 123,000 employed 145,000 new men out of over a million applicants.<sup>5</sup> This means that there was an enormous number of personal adjustments to be made.

**Measuring Irregular Employment.**—The Committee of the Federated American Engineering Societies which reported in 1921 on the elimination of waste in industry, stated that there appear to be at all times more than a million men out of work in the United States. The Committee found even in the phenomenal years of 1917 and 1918 at the climax of war-time industrial activities, when plants were working to capacity and when unemployment reached its lowest point in twenty years, that there were still more than a million men constantly out of work. This same Committee reported in further detail the percentage of lost time in various trades—clothing workers 31 per cent, shoe makers 35 per cent, building trades 37 per cent, confectionery 13 per cent, brick making 15 per cent.<sup>6</sup> In 1914 the number of persons employed in canneries ranged from 28,000 on January 15 to 186,000 on September 15. The number of farm laborers called for at offices of the United States Employment Service in 1918 ranged from less than 100 in January to nearly 70,000 in June.<sup>7</sup> Lescohier estimates that the small grain harvest in the midwest requires about 100,000 men in addition to those who live on the farms; but the total harvest labor force

<sup>5</sup> Brissenden, and Frankel, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-60.

<sup>6</sup> *Waste in Industry*, pp. 15-16.

<sup>7</sup> *Waste in Industry*, pp. 270-272.

is believed to include from 150,000 to 200,000.<sup>8</sup> Bituminous coal miners during the last thirty years have worked on the average only 215 days out of 308. This loss of 93 days a year is 30 per cent of the potential working time. Even during the War there was an average loss of 65 days in 1917 and 59 days in 1918. In all other years of the last thirty the lost time has never been less than 74 days. In 1919 it was 113 days and in 1921 was not far from 140 days.<sup>9</sup>

Brissenden and Frankel, in the study already referred to, found that in order to maintain a labor force of 212,000 workers it was necessary on the average to employ 256,000 new persons each year. This was as though during one year all the employes had left their jobs and a complete new set had taken their places. Actually, of course, this did not happen. Perhaps three-fifths of the workmen remained more than a year, while the other two-fifths were replaced several times in the course of each year. On the basis of establishments studied it was estimated that for 1919, factories in the United States lost about 7,700,000 employes and took on about 8,240,000 in order to maintain a labor force of 9,100,000. This meant not far from 16,000,000 job changes in manufacturing establishments in the United States during that one year.

The method of measuring irregularities of employment used in this study is somewhat as follows. Those hired are referred to as *accessions*. Those leaving service, no matter for what reason, are called *separations*. The accessions which are made to fill vacancies caused by separations are known as *replacements*. The total number of changes, that is the sum of accessions and separations is the *labor flux*. The *rates of change* are computed by dividing the number of accessions, separations or labor flux, by the total labor hours and multiplying by 3,000 (the approximate number of hours put in by one worker employed throughout the year) or by 10,000 (to facilitate calculation). The "normal" working force is determined by dividing the total

<sup>8</sup> Lescohier, *op. cit.*, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> Tryon, F. G., and McKenney, W. F., in *Survey*, 47: 1009.



labor hours by 3,000. If the number of workers who leave is equal to the "normal" working force the separation rate is 1.0 on the 3,000-labor-hour base or 3.3 on the 10,000-labor-hour base. The same ratios apply to the accession rate and flux-rate.

On the latter basis the rate of accessions in the decade covered ranged from 2.6 in 1915 to 6.9 in 1917-18. The separation rates ranged from 2.1 in 1915 to 6.7 in 1917-18. The total labor flux for the corresponding years was 4.7 and 13.6 respectively. The rates for 1917-18 are substantially those which would have obtained, if during these twelve months all the employes had left their jobs, an entirely new set had come in to fill their places and afterward all these had left and had been in turn fully replaced by a third set of workers. Again we should remember that this was not what actually happened. Instead, along with the stability of a majority of the working force there was a very high turnover in positions filled by the minority. These rates varied also in different industries. The accession rates ranged from 2.7 on street railways to 10.6 in the manufacturing of miscellaneous metal products. The separation rate ranged from 3.2 on street railways to 10.2 in furniture and mill work.

**Reasons for the Broken Year.**—This study by Brissenden and Frankel which we have been discussing is an important guide to us in our search for the causes of irregular employment. It has been estimated that about 25 per cent of the working force in an industrial establishment may be expected to leave in any year for "unavoidable" reasons such as death, sickness, and discharge for manifest unfitness. On this basis the unnecessary or excessive labor changes in the establishments considered ranged from 54 per cent of the total number of labor changes in 1915 to 86 per cent in 1917-18. The important problem then is to account for the so-called "unnecessary" labor changes. Some clues are fortunately available. For example, the total flux rate of labor changes in 1917-18 (based on 10,000 labor hours) was 9.6 for skilled workmen and 29.4 for unskilled. Over a period of seven years it

was found that 16 per cent of the total separations were due to discharges, 11 per cent to lay-offs and 73 per cent to so-called "voluntary" separations. Among the voluntary separations 25 per cent were attributed to dissatisfaction with wage rates, 12 per cent to the securing of a better job and a smaller proportion to the severity of the work, monotony, physical disability, etc. Among the causes for discharge the following were listed by employers; incompetent, 33 per cent; unreliable, 29 per cent; lazy, 10 per cent. Other reasons cited were carelessness, misconduct, and stirring up trouble.<sup>10</sup> The season of the year was found to affect the rates of labor change, which were highest in April and May, and lowest in November and December. Stated in terms of seasons, the rates were lowest in the fall and highest in the spring. Further light was shed on the concentration of the labor turnover in a relatively small part of the working force. Thus, in 1917-18 only one-eighth of those on the pay roll at the end of the year had been with the firm less than three months; while of those who left the service during the year, three-fifths remained less than three months.

Important differences were discovered between individual establishments. The rate of labor turnover seemed to vary with: (1) the character of the industry, the extent to which it was subject to highly seasonal variations in employment; (2) character of the labor force as to sex, skill and type of occupations involved; (3) wages, hours and general conditions of employment; (4) the effectiveness of the management in overcoming influences conducive to change of jobs. It was found that the rates of change tended to vary inversely with the number of employes in the establishment. Thus in 1917-18, the flux rate for establishments employing less than 1,000 persons was 5.19. For those employing 1,000 to 5,000, it was 4.29. For those employing over 5,000 it was 3.45. The reasons for lower rates in the larger establishments are not altogether clear. Those suggested

<sup>10</sup> It may well be suspected that many of the reasons offered by both employers and employes are rationalizations—"good" reasons rather than "real" reasons.



are steadier work, higher earnings, better employment conditions generally, influence of service and welfare activities and the possibility of interdepartmental changes. The investigators compared ten establishments selected because of their liberal labor policies and centralized employment machinery with all the other establishments which reported from 1913 to 1919. The average flux rate in the ten selected establishments (based on 10,000 labor hours) was 5.1. In the other establishments it was 7.5. The difference is even more marked in certain years. Thus in 1917 the flux rate in the ten selected establishments was 3.6, while in the others it was 11.5. These figures seem to indicate clearly that regularity of work lies very much in the hands of the employers.

Turning from manufacturing establishments to bituminous coal mines, we find interesting data at hand. It is pointed out in the article previously referred to<sup>11</sup> that some causes of irregular work for miners are car shortage, labor troubles and over-development. Out of the 93 days lost in an average year, 15 may be attributed to irregularities in demand due to business cycles, 44 days to seasonal variations in demand and 34 days to irregularities traceable primarily to over-development. The car shortage is obviously bound up with the irregular buying together with the need of cars for other purposes. For instance, large numbers of people buy their coal in the early fall when the railroads are busy handling the grain crops. Labor troubles are themselves due in part to irregular employment. But they have other sources such as unsatisfactory wage rates, tyranny of foremen and managers and intolerable living conditions in mining camps. The over-development in the bituminous field is due largely to the fact that soft coal may be found under nearly one-sixth of the surface of the United States. Hence it has been relatively easy to open new mines with the result that there is now an annual capacity of about 750,000,000 tons, when the most that has ever been burned and exported in a year is 550,000,000 tons. This excessive capacity of

<sup>11</sup> Tryon, F. G., and McKenney, W. F., in *Survey*, 47: 1011-1013.

200,000,000 tons carries with it an excessive labor supply of 190,000 men.

Causes of irregularity in agricultural labor stand out most clearly in studies of the wheat harvest.<sup>12</sup> The labor force includes farmers whose crops have been ruined or impaired, farmers who have not enough land to make a living, students and other young men seeking new experience, "prodigal sons" trying to earn enough to return home, soldiers and sailors between enlistments and men attracted by the lure of outdoor life. Aside from the fact that harvest labor is at best irregular and uncertain, there are additional causes of difficulty. Sometimes rain delays the harvest; always it interrupts work. There is variation in the time of sowing and a late spring may increase the gap between the southern and northern harvests. Damage to the crop by rust, grasshoppers, drought or hail is responsible for men failing to find work in sections where there was plenty during the preceding season. There is much unwise advertising by individuals and districts more concerned in securing a surplus of labor than in an equitable distribution thereof and a "square deal" to the men. Laborers frequently lack the necessary funds to reach places where they are needed, and when they get to the wheat sections a good deal of friction is occasioned by the varying wage scales.

So far as the economic side is concerned, the whole matter might be summarized in terms of a disorganized labor market. The Chicago Commission on Unemployment found in 1912 that out of 45 employers only 4 used public employment exchanges to secure laborers, 5 used private exchanges, 16 relied on newspaper advertisements and 43 received applications at the plant.<sup>13</sup> A study of 760 employers in New York showed that 440 secured help only through the personal application of workers at the plant, while only 290 combined with that method the patronage of various kinds of employment agencies.<sup>14</sup> The real sig-

<sup>12</sup> Lescohier, *op. cit.*

<sup>13</sup> Report of the Mayor's Commission on Unemployment, Chicago, p. 32.

<sup>14</sup> Report of New York Commission on Unemployment, 1911, p. 161.



nificance of these figures is that there is no really effective machinery in the United States for prompt bringing together of employers who want workmen and laborers who want jobs. This important matter is left very much to chance.

An important task that remains to be performed is to study a large number of persons whose work is irregular, in order to determine why they rather than others happen to be the victims of cyclic, seasonal or other variations of employment. In the absence of definite data we can only project hypothetically what such a study may reveal. It may show that some workers are drawn into irregular employment by the example of parents or associates. It may indicate that some—immigrants, for example—are forced to take these left-over jobs in the industrial world. It may discover in a considerable number some sort of emotional instability and a genuine inability to persist at one task. It may demonstrate that some casual laborers are so limited in native ability that they can secure work only when there is a labor shortage. Perhaps such a study will demonstrate that none of these hypotheses is correct and that the real explanation is something different.

**What Happens When Work Is Irregular.**—The consequences of irregular employment may, for convenience, be classified as economic, social and personal. The economic consequences include wage losses, industrial disorganization and increased prices. The social effects include excessive mobility, loss of interest in local institutions and detachment of individuals from such groups as family, trade union and community. The personal results include isolation and demoralization.

One of the most obvious effects of irregular employment is the loss of potential earnings. The Chicago Commission on Unemployment in 1912 found that the average member in 5 out of 22 trade unions lost more than 50 per cent of his possible earnings because of irregular work. The study of longshoremen referred to previously indicated that ten years ago the typical longshoreman of New York earned on the average less than \$12.00 a week. This would make

about \$600 a year, but at the same time it was estimated, in cost-of-living studies, that \$800 to \$900 was necessary to maintain a family in health and decency. As a result of the irregularities of employment, therefore, an adequate income was rarely within the reach of a longshoreman, even if he were willing and able to work excessively long hours when employment was available.

In many cases the employer, too, suffers a financial loss from the irregularity of employment. When he cannot provide steady work and sometimes when he can, he must be hiring and training new laborers. It has been estimated that for certain industries the cost of breaking in each new employe is over \$50.00.<sup>15</sup> This figure includes the clerical work of hiring, instruction of new workers, increased wear and tear on machinery and tools, reduced production, increased amount of spoiled work and more accidents. High labor mobility also means a loss of team work which is essential to successful operation of any industry. The consequences of irregular employment in coal mining have been admirably summarized in the following words.<sup>16</sup>

The limitation on the opportunity to labor, however, is not the only grievance of the soft coal miner. The work when it does come is irritatingly spasmodic. This intermittency of employment, even in times of active demand, is a contributing cause of the absenteeism and large labor turnover of which the operator complains. Irregular employment tends to beget irregular habits.

But the miner is not the only one to suffer from the intermittency of operation. To the operator it means increased costs, lower profits, difficulty in obtaining and keeping an adequate labor force, mechanical troubles in the mine, waste of the resource. According to the Engineers' Committee of the Fuel Administration, costs of production are above normal by 29 per cent, when running time is below normal by 40 per cent. Irregular operation is one of the competitive factors which compel waste in exploiting the resource, a waste beyond control of the operator, but which leaves underground perhaps 30 tons for every 70 tons brought to the surface.

The railroads suffer from the irregularities in coal production because they cannot supply cars enough when the demand is most active, and when the demand falls off, the cars they have

<sup>15</sup> Lee, F. S., *Human Machine and Industrial Efficiency*, p. 50.

<sup>16</sup> Tryon, F. G., and McKenney, W. F., in *Survey*, 47: 1010-1011.



cannot be employed. Counting cars, locomotives, and a share of the investment in way and fixtures, the railroads have spent about as much money getting ready to transport coal as the operators have spent in getting ready to produce it, and the fluctuating demand for coal cars is one reason for low railroad earnings and high railroad rates.

And as for the consumer of coal, he has to pay for the whole expensive business. He must pay the labor and capital in the industry for the 93 days of idleness as well as for the 215 days of work. What the money cost of maintaining this excess equipment of mine, miners, and transportation amounts to cannot, of course, be measured. Eugene McAuliffe, an Illinois operator, has boldly guessed it to be \$500,000,000 a year at 1920 cost levels. But let us neglect the dollar sign and think of the loss in terms of days of potential human labor. In the 20 years from 1900 through 1919 the coal miners of the country were idle one and one-sixth billion working days, the equivalent of maintaining a standing army of 190,000 men. To put it in another way, it was equal to the man-days of productive effort lost in mobilizing our military and naval forces from April 6, 1917, to the day of the Armistice.

In our study of homeless men we have noted the demoralizing influences that bear upon the migratory casual laborer. We have seen how the low wages, unskilled nature of the work and great irregularity tend to break the habit and desire for stable industry among these workers. We have seen how they tend to slip down from the status of casual laborers to that of tramps or "bums." The man who has a regular job has the incentive of holding that job to spur him on. He is likely to go to work without much reference to his physical condition or the call of other interests. But the casual laborer has no pride in the position he occupies—no stimulating sense of being a permanent part of an important industry; the budgeting of his personal and family expenses becomes well-nigh impossible; his reputation as a worker makes little difference; he tends to become less and less efficient, more and more irresponsible. The uncertainty of his income and the fruitless changing of jobs develop a sense of injustice and a chronic state of unrest.

Besides economic loss and personal demoralization, the consequences of irregular employment include more or less

social disorganization. Men whose jobs are of brief or uncertain duration are apt to shift about a great deal and to lose interest in local institutions such as church, school, lodge and city government. Forced to go about in search of work, they may become detached from their families. This separation may be the beginning of a break in domestic ties. The trade union is another social group which suffers from irregular employment. Men whose work takes them from place to place are not only hard to win over to union membership; they are even harder to retain in good standing. Finally, the local community suffers a measure of disorganization because of its floating population. Men who are physically present without participating in the activities of the community constitute a disturbing factor which is not easily overcome. Usually they not only abstain from assuming civic responsibility; they often lend themselves to the manipulation of political bosses who seek to obstruct real community organization. When men who are frequently out of work come to think of themselves as a class apart there is a further break-down of social solidarity.

#### **Agencies Which Serve Men Whose Work Is Irregular.**

—Among the agencies which serve men out of work are a number which have been mentioned in previous chapters. These include family welfare societies, Salvation Army, Y. M. C. A., and municipal lodging houses as well as minor philanthropic and commercial enterprises. But the institutions which may be expected to contribute most directly to the needed adjustments of irregular workers are the various kinds of employment agencies. These are of three principal varieties, commercial, philanthropic and public.

There are probably between 4,000 and 5,000 commercial employment agencies in the United States. In 1912 there were 250 in Chicago and in 1919 there were about 600 in New York City. There are several different types. Labor agencies deal almost entirely with unskilled workmen whom they send out to railroad and other construction work. They advertise and circularize in order to secure and keep their business with employers. They obtain men largely through interpreters and others who have access



to immigrant groups. These agencies are charged with "stealing" workmen away from jobs, splitting fees with foremen and arranging for frequent discharge in order that they may collect new fees. Domestic agencies supply kitchen girls, dish washers, scrub women and other unskilled women workers. They are very similar to the labor agencies, except that they usually do not send the women to distant places. Somewhat more limited in scope are hotel agencies, clerical and mercantile agencies, general employment exchanges, theatrical, nurses' and teachers' agencies.

A very significant aspect of nearly all these commercial agencies is that they do not concern themselves with helping men to make permanent adjustments. The most that can ordinarily be expected from them is aid in the solution of immediate problems, the effecting of temporary accommodations. This is natural because they are business enterprises maintained for pecuniary reasons. Hence their methods have been such as to yield them an individual profit rather than to keep the workers steadily employed. They find their largest profits oftentimes in placing people in situations which are temporary. All this is aside from the fact that many of the private employment offices are known to be dishonest and fraudulent. They frequently misrepresent pay, permanence of positions and other conditions of work. They frequently accept fees even when there is no possibility of securing a place for an applicant.

In addition to the commercial agencies there are numerous employment bureaus maintained by philanthropic organizations, employers' associations and trade unions. The philanthropic agencies include Salvation Army, Y. M. C. A. and other religious bodies and non-sectarian associations such as the Christian Industrial League in Chicago and the Helping Hand Institute in Kansas City. The philanthropic employment bureaus do not play a very large part in organizing the labor market because they constitute a series of distinct and sometimes competing centers between which there is very little cooperation. They usually restrict their operations to one city. Employers who desire

efficient workers do not often turn to such institutions for help, and when they do they seem to expect to secure workers at less than the current rate of wages. On the other hand, more efficient workmen are not apt to go to such agencies. Hence the usefulness of these bureaus is distinctly limited.

A number of trade unions make some organized effort to place their members in jobs. In some cases the business agent of the local union gives most of his time to employment work. But like the philanthropic agencies, those maintained by the trade unions have a limited use because they serve a very restricted group of workers; there is limited cooperation between the several agencies; they do not serve unskilled and migratory workers; their methods are oftentimes exceedingly haphazard; and only where they have a practical monopoly in the trade do they have organized means of securing information concerning positions.

Employers' associations have sometimes established employment bureaus, usually because of their dissatisfaction with other agencies. Ordinarily no fee is charged and on the whole these bureaus are more efficiently managed than the others we have described. The employers benefit by the careful rating of applicants and are reasonably sure of receiving the kind of workmen they require. The workers, however, are usually suspicious of such employment bureaus, fearing that they will be used for blacklisting, breaking strikes and beating down wages.

Under the laws of numerous states all private employment agencies whether commercial or not, are subject to licensing and inspection. Sometimes a bond is required. Usually the agency must keep a register of all applicants both for employment and for workers. Sometimes the law limits the fee that may be charged and forbids the giving of false information, or making any false promises about positions.

For the reasons indicated, private employment agencies contribute rather little toward effecting lasting adjustments for persons whose work is irregular. Not only do they render limited services to individuals; they help very little



to bring about such an economic reorganization as would stabilize employment. Many of them really aggravate the economic and social disorganization involved in irregular work. Hence it is probably fair to consider them as factors in unadjustment rather than in accommodation.

**Public Employment Bureaus.**—A number of countries have established public employment bureaus with the apparent hope of organizing the entire labor market. New Zealand established public employment exchanges in 1891, Norway and Sweden in 1906, Great Britain in 1909. Since then a number of other countries have followed with similar legislation. In the United States employment service was begun by the Federal Government in 1907, under authority conferred upon the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. Under subsequent legislation there was built up a separate employment service which involved the cooperation of the departments of labor, agriculture and the post-office. The country was divided into zones, originally sixteen in number. Cooperative arrangements were made with state and municipal employment bureaus and for three or four years a large number of men were placed in positions. In 1919 requests were made for 10,700,000 workers, 6,200,000 persons applied for positions and 4,250,000 were reported to have been actually placed. After the War, financial support was practically withdrawn by Congress so that at present only a skeleton service is maintained. One of the most important parts of the United States Employment Service today is the Farm Labor Bureau, which in 1923 recruited and distributed for seasonal farm labor over 160,000 men.

Somewhat earlier than the establishment of Federal bureaus there was a beginning of public employment service under a number of municipalities and states. Seattle led the way among the cities in 1894, and Michigan among the states in 1895. By 1916 nearly 100 municipal and state employment exchanges had been established. As might be expected, there is the widest possible variation in appropriations, equipment and personnel. Wisconsin, Massachusetts, New York and Ohio are among the states which have

gone farthest in developing a unified system. But in many instances the various offices are not well coordinated. Frequently little effort is made to secure work for applicants, or workers for prospective employers; but on the other hand, some public bureaus assume very definite responsibility for soliciting new business. Some of the offices seem to have no definite system of preferences in placements, while others are governed by priority of application, need of the applicant, residence or marital state. On the whole, the idea of placing men as an act of charity has disappeared from the public employment offices. Most of the public bureaus state that they inform applicants of strikes or lock-outs and allow them to decide for themselves whether they wish employment under the circumstances. A considerable number refuse to send anyone to such positions.

If the purpose of the public labor exchanges is to overcome economic and social disorganization in the field of employment, they can hardly be called a success. There are a number of reasons for their limited achievements. Frequently the personnel is recruited from the ranks of politicians, and is not qualified for the work to be done. Skilled workmen have made relatively little use of the public agencies so that they have handled chiefly casual labor. The inferior class of their clients, inadequate training of the officials and insufficient appropriations tend to lower the standards of the public offices and keep them from being of great value as a means of organizing the labor market. However, their accomplishments are sufficient to indicate that they will have a place in any program of social and industrial reorganization through which the difficulties of irregular workers may be adjusted. Studies of the systems in other countries, together with data from the more successful exchanges in the United States, indicate that they offer real possibilities of reducing time lost between jobs, and of regularizing employment.

**Can Work Be Regularized?**—Other programs for the decasualizing of labor are of interest to us not only because of their possible constructive value, but because as they are



tried out they will shed light on the factors involved in the disorganization itself. With reference to coal mining emphasis has been laid upon the need of improved transportation facilities, distribution of sales throughout the year by means of increased storage facilities and special prices in dull seasons, limitation of new developments, reduction in the number of operating mines and transfer of 200,000 miners to other occupations.

In the building trades it is claimed that greater regularity might be achieved, if contractors would bid for varied types of construction, if they would "shave down" bids for contracts in order to carry their organization through dull periods, and if they would adopt the policy of taking small and perhaps unremunerative contracts, so that the working force not engaged in large undertakings might be utilized.

For longshoremen the War-time experience was highly illuminating. There was created in New York an elastic labor pool by means of which men could be shifted rapidly from one dock to another, from one part of the city to another and from city to city. It was believed that in this way the efficiency of the port of New York alone was increased by 30 per cent.

For the reduction of lost time among farm laborers several devices have been tried. For example, a conference of county agents was held in Kansas to forecast the number of men needed. The demand for threshers has been spread out by the Canadian Government through the requirement that some farmers wait until the threshing of others has been done. Control of advertising has been attempted by the United States Employment Service through its daily bulletins, posters and news releases. In Canada the reduced-fare excursion has been found an effective means for controlling the supply and distribution of labor in the harvest. The railroads run special excursions into the wheat belt when help is needed and check the flow of labor by taking off some or all of the excursions when enough men have been secured.

Means of providing more regular employment in factories are suggested by the program of the Dennison Manufacturing Company. This is described in the following statement from the personnel department of that firm.<sup>17</sup>

1. Reduction of seasonal orders by getting customers to order at least a minimum amount, well in advance of the season.
2. The increase of the proportion of non-seasonal orders with a long delivery time.
3. The planning of all stock items more than a year in advance.
4. The planning of interdepartmental needs well in advance.
5. The building up of out-of-season items and the varying of our lines so as to balance one demand against another.

Besides these methods of decreasing the pressure of seasonal demands, and evening out the inequalities, we can meet seasonal employment by conforming ourselves somewhat to it. We can balance the decrease in work of one department against the surplus of another. We can transfer operatives not needed in one line to another where there is work on hand. In doing so we make it a rule to transfer our operatives to the same off-season work each time, so that they will develop proficiency in these off-season trades.

Other suggestions for regularizing work are monopolistic control of particular industries, public ownership, distribution of public works over a long period of time, business forecasting, training in "industrial engineering," vocational guidance and training, limitation of immigration, and promotion of international peace. All of these indicate that control of the amount and distribution of employment lies beyond the reach of individual workmen. They indicate further that so long as attention is concentrated on individuals only temporary adjustments are likely to be achieved. Lasting accommodations appear to require a rather thorough-going reorganization of the industrial and political order.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Secure the personal histories of men or women whose work is irregular. Note personal, social and economic factors.
2. Study various occupations in your home district and state,

<sup>17</sup> Quoted by Ernest G. Draper in *New York Times*, September 11, 1921.



- with reference to regularity of employment. Secure data from unions, employers and individual workers.
3. Visit several types of employment agencies and report on:
    - a. Control—e.g., state, union, commercial
    - b. Personnel—training, experience, attitudes toward applicants, salaries
    - c. Office and equipment—are there separate waiting rooms?
    - d. Kinds of positions filled and tenure
    - e. How jobs are found
    - f. How workers are secured
    - g. Fees charged
    - h. Attitudes of workers and of employers toward the agency
  4. Write abstracts of the laws of your state which deal with employment bureaus, public and private. Compare them with those of other states.
  5. Discover what efforts have been made in your home district and state to decasualize and regularize employment.

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## CHAPTER XIV

### UNEMPLOYMENT AND BUSINESS DEPRESSIONS

In the preceding chapter we called attention to five types of irregularity in employment: (1) unemployment due to business depressions, (2) seasonal irregularity, (3) daily and weekly variations, (4) labor turnover, (5) odd jobs of the relatively unemployable. Some analysis was made of each of these except the first, to which the present chapter is devoted. Here we have to do with the unadjustments accompanying business crises which recur in cycles of several years each. Such periods of depression have come in the United States in 1920-22, 1913-14, and 1907. In these years unusually large numbers of men were out of work for months at a time. Hence there was disorganization of the personal and family life of many who were rarely affected by the other types of irregularity. No doubt this is one reason so much more attention has been given to this economic situation than to the others we have discussed. But a more important reason is the spectacular nature of mass unemployment.

It is natural that most studies of this problem should be largely economic in character. But of late there have been attempts to discover the significance of business depressions for personality and social organization. One of the closest approaches to such an analysis is that made by the United States Children's Bureau during the depression of 1920-22. The following excerpts are taken from the report of this study.<sup>1</sup>

A Hungarian couple who have been in the United States 18 years, and residents of the city 9 years, are about 35

<sup>1</sup> *Unemployment and Child Welfare*, U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 125, 1923, pp. 40-41, 50-51, 68-69.

years old and have four boys, whose ages are 1, 4, 9, and 13 years, and a girl of 11. The father is a molder and in ordinary times can earn about \$1,800 a year. With so large a family it was not possible to save much, but they were buying their home by monthly payments of \$20.

The father was laid off in October, 1920, and the period of unemployment had stretched to 15 months. During this time he had picked up a few short-time laboring jobs, the pay for which totaled less than \$150. The mother economized as much as possible on food, reducing the milk from 4 or 5 quarts to 3 a day, cutting out fruit and sweets, and buying meat once a week instead of once or twice daily. They ran up a \$66 grocery bill and a debt of \$6 at a tea and coffee store, and then credit was refused them. They borrowed \$60 from friends and ran behind on insurance payments and payments on the house. Finally the mother, although not a strong woman, and with much to do in caring for her own home, succeeded in finding cleaning to do, two days a week for seven weeks. Part of the time she took the children to a day nursery and the other days the 11-year-old girl cared for them at home. The mother has earned a total of \$42 during the father's unemployment. The family is now living entirely on city-commissary orders, and has a bill there of \$36.35.

The 13-year-old boy had kept the family supplied with fuel by picking coal off the railroad tracks. He finally was caught and arrested and he and his father were brought into the juvenile court. At the first hearing the father was ordered to pay \$14 for the "stolen" coal and was given two weeks in which to get the money. Only two days of the two weeks are left, and the father expects to go to jail because he has nothing with which to pay.

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In one family visited there are five children, a baby born less than a month ago, and four children 1, 3, 7, and 14 years of age. The father, 41 years old, and the mother, 35, are both native born. The father earned \$28 a week as janitor-guard in a foundry, but since he lost that employ-



ment in October, 1920, he has had only a little city work and a few odd jobs, amounting to about four weeks' work in all, for which he received an average of \$10 a week. When the father lost his job the mother got housework in a private family for six days a week and also worked half a day on Sunday cleaning a bakery. She continued to do this, earning \$12 a week and her meals, until a week before the baby was born. She was cared for during confinement by a visiting nurse. The 14-year-old girl had been kept out of school to care for the younger children while the mother was at work and the father was hunting employment. She is now at home working on a "home permit" from the school attendance office. She is in the eighth grade, but she has lost about half the present term. The father says he is sorry she has been kept out of school, as he might as well have stayed at home himself—he had wasted his time looking for work.

The family lives in a dilapidated four-room frame cottage located behind other buildings, so that the only entrance is through an alley or between the houses which face on the street. They have lived here three years, and the rent has been raised from \$10 to \$12 a month since the father's unemployment. The floors are bare and the rooms are very scantily furnished, but everything is neat and clean. The kitchen stove furnishes the only heat. In order to save electric light bills kerosene lamps are used except when one of the family "gets excited over reading" and the lamplight is too poor to see by.

A relief society gave the family grocery orders during the time the mother was unable to work before and after her confinement. The father now has temporary city work; if he is able to keep this or to get other steady work the mother will stay at home. The total amount of charitable aid the family has received during the father's unemployment amounts to \$75. They were compelled to give up the life insurance held by the mother, father, and children, the loss amounting to about \$20 in all. The mother has a horror of debts and will not allow anything to be bought on credit, and they have contracted no debts except the

doctor's bill for the mother's recent confinement. If they have no money they have no food. They have been getting no milk and only cheap food—and little of that.

The father has had blood poisoning since he lost his job, the 3-year-old girl fell and cut her face and eye while the mother was at work, and the year-old child has had a crushed hand. The family has had fewer comforts than ever before and nothing but the absolute essentials. Practically all their clothes have been made over from articles given the mother by the people for whom she worked.

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An Italian family consisting of father, mother, and four children ranging from 2 to 10 years of age, is heavily in debt. The father is 42 years old, and has been in the United States 10 years. He has recently passed the examination for his citizenship papers but can not afford the \$4 necessary to obtain them. He is a laborer and a steady worker and eager to get ahead. In 1920 he earned in the neighborhood of \$2,000. Three years ago he began buying a six-room house on "land contract"—the monthly payment of \$20 covering interest on the mortgage and a small payment on the principal. The house is comfortably furnished, having a good dining-room set and a victrola and a leather davenport in the parlor.

The family had not been able to save, because the house was old and in need of repairs, they needed furniture, and the poor health of the mother had necessitated large expenditures for doctors and medicine. As a result, the father was utterly unprepared for the long period of unemployment which came upon him without warning in October, 1920. The family was favorably known in the neighborhood, so obtained credit and struggled along for over a year without asking public aid. The father's total earnings during 14 months were \$28, which he made at work for the city. To add to their difficulties the mother had to undergo a serious operation, the bills for which are still unpaid. Also, the father's brother died, and the father had to share in the funeral expenses. Since credit was cut



off in November, 1921, the family has been receiving one grocery order a week from the city commissary, and also was given a Christmas basket and some clothing by the relief association.

The mother has cut down living expenses to the limit. She takes less milk, and no meat, fruit, or sweets. The meals are practically all alike—bread, coffee, and spaghetti, or bread, coffee, and beans. The children's outside clothing is holding out pretty well, but their underwear, which was cheap to begin with, is torn, thin, and much patched. The day before the agent's visit a large amount of plaster had fallen from the dining-room ceiling, and the father had managed to buy "on trust" the materials to repair it. The rooms need repapering badly. The payments on the house are seven months in arrears, and the father fears he will lose it.

The family now owes:

Groceries .....	400
Meat .....	15
Shoes .....	10
Clothing .....	80
Doctor's bill .....	114
Hospital bill .....	28
Repairs to house .....	115
Uncle's funeral .....	55
Payments on house.....	140
Cash borrowed .....	155
<hr/>	
Total .....	\$1,152

To this must be added what they owe the city commissary.

Both the mother and father are nearly frantic with worry. The mother has a great deal to do at home, yet she has been walking the streets looking for work. She broke down and cried over the situation. The father figures that even if work begins at once it will take him at least 10 years to get out of debt. He dreads the time when he begins earning again, for he will be working for less pay, every one of his creditors will want to be paid immediately, and his family must live.

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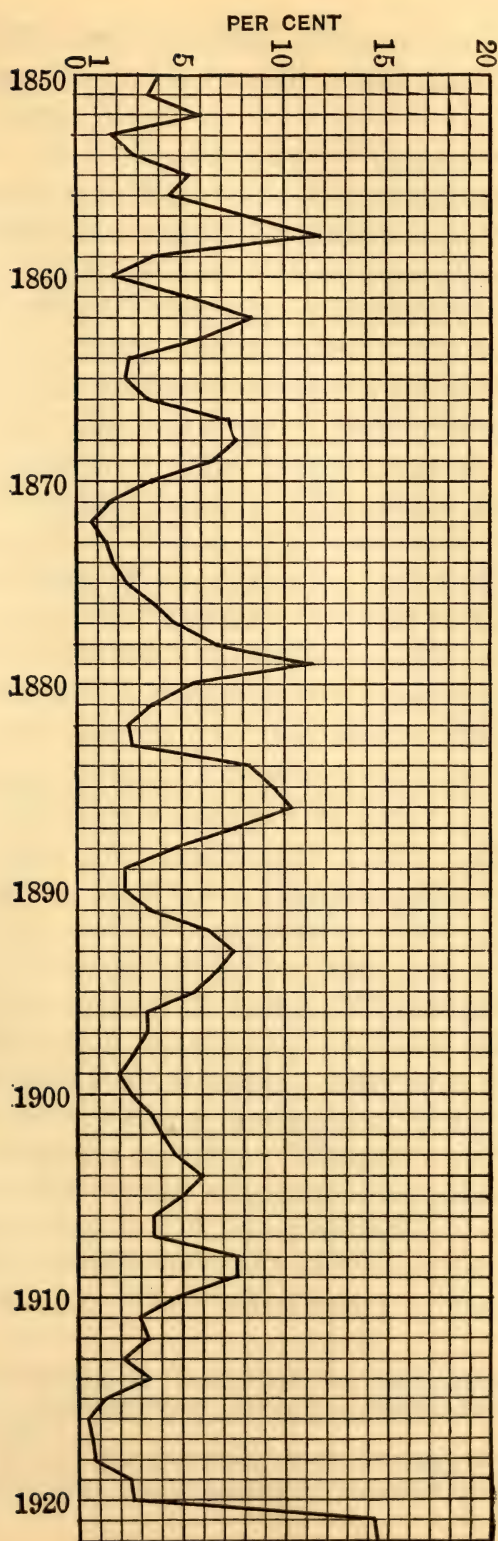
The two most obvious personal consequences of unemployment in these three families were loss of security and loss of status. They were without confidence in themselves or the world about. They had come to the end of their visible resources. The second family had given up its life insurance. The third was deeply in debt and about to lose the home for which they were paying; they were "nearly frantic with worry"; in discussing the situation the woman broke down and cried. Loss of status showed itself in the broken pride and self-respect. The first family was humiliated by the boy's arrest and his father's threatened jail sentence. The second lived in horror of debts, its symbol of demoralization. The third family felt quite hopeless about recovering its former position. All were humiliated by the wearing of deteriorated clothing, by living in dilapidated houses, by loss of credit and by having to accept relief. These things are the more significant when we remember that these were families ordinarily self-supporting and self-respecting, with an honorable place in their community.

**The Volume of Unemployment.**—Various efforts have been made to determine the volume of unemployment from year to year. Since no comprehensive data are available it is necessary for us to make use of relatively limited records which are at hand. One very interesting demonstration of the fluctuation of unemployment in cycles of four to ten years each is the following graph which is based on reports from British trade unions over a period of more than 70 years.<sup>2</sup>

In September, 1921, President Harding called a conference on unemployment to consider the conditions which developed during the business depression of 1920-22. The data which the President's Conference was able to assemble were far from complete but they indicated that from January, 1920, to September, 1921, the reduction in the number of workers on pay rolls was between 3,500,000 and 4,000,000. These figures did not include persons employed on farms. The industries hardest hit were iron and steel,

<sup>2</sup> Cole, G. D. H., *Out of Work*, p. 93.





PERCENTAGE OF TRADE UNIONISTS UNEMPLOYED; GREAT BRITAIN, 1850-1922  
Annual Averages Based on Reports of Trade Unions





building trades and textiles. The bulk of the unemployment appeared in cities, though it was also present in small towns and rural districts.<sup>3</sup>

Because of the impossibility of determining a satisfactory base on which to calculate unemployment, a number of statisticians have urged the measurement of employment instead. As we have seen in the preceding chapter, it is perfectly feasible to determine a satisfactory basis for calculating variations in employment. Hence the remainder of this discussion will be in terms of the number of persons *at work* rather than in terms of those who are *out of work*. The most dependable data worked out on this basis are those of the National Bureau of Economic Research.<sup>4</sup> They show, among other things, the maximum cyclical decline in the percentage of employes on pay rolls in the United States from the first quarter of 1920 to the first quarter of 1922. For all the industries studied this was 14 per cent. Specifically it ranged from 3 per cent in commerce and trade to 43 per cent in the metal industries.

**The Business Cycle.**—"During this year (1921) millions of us were idle when we wished to work, billions of dollars' worth of plant and machinery stood unused when the owners longed to start their furnaces, and what we wanted to produce we needed to consume. The edict of enchantment which forbade us to do what we wished was pronounced by the money economy. We are periodically mastered by this social machinery we have made, and stand idle and needy at its bidding. For with all its efficiency the money economy has a fundamental defect—it warps the aim of our economic activity. What we are compelled to do as citizens of the money economy is to make money. And when for any reason it is not profitable to make goods, we are forced to sacrifice our will as human beings to our will as money makers. That is the heart of the paradox."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Report of President's Conference on Unemployment, pp. 47-58.

<sup>4</sup> King, W. I., *Employment, Hours and Earnings in Prosperity and Depression*, p. 30.

<sup>5</sup> Mitchell, W. C., *The Problem of Controlling Business Cycles*, in Edie, L. (editor), *The Stabilization of Business*, p. 52.

Any extended explanation of the business cycle must be left to the economists.<sup>6</sup> Here we shall have to content ourselves with a bare description of some of its most obvious characteristics. Let us start with the point at which a boom is getting under way. Increased orders are flowing into the factories and wholesale houses. There is a feeling of confidence; prices are rising. Wages are increasing slowly if at all, hence the costs of production are relatively low. For the expansion of business credit is required and banks are asked to advance ever larger sums to merchants and manufacturers. The rate of interest rises and prices are forced still higher. Owners are not content with fuller use of existing plants; new factories are started and new companies are floated. The constructional industries are especially stimulated. Because wages have lagged behind the rise in prices, an increased proportion of the national income is going into the pockets of investors. These larger profits are used in great part for new investments or the expansion of existing business. In other words, the additional production is directed largely toward the creation of additional means of production. Eventually as the demand for workers increases it becomes possible for employes to secure advances in wages. The higher wages stimulate the demand for consumable goods and force prices still higher. There is under way a process which on the surface looks as though it might continue indefinitely.

But after a time the rising tide of prices, optimism and expansion begins to recede. Banks must maintain certain reserves. Their total loans must not exceed more than a certain proportion of the funds held in reserve. When this limit is reached, the banks begin to refuse further loans. This is one of the first checks upon the trade boom. But there are others. As machinery and factories increase, the output of producers' goods, that is, materials to be used in further productive processes, becomes greater than the amount which can be used in the country of their origin. Hence there is a demand for foreign markets; but the

<sup>6</sup> Cole, G. D. H., *op. cit.*, pp. 42-51; Mitchell, W. C., *op. cit.*, pp. 15-35.



capacity of foreign markets is not unlimited and may be very closely restricted by unfortunate economic conditions abroad. Hence there is a very real limit to the possible expansion of markets. Another factor in the checking of trade booms is the tendency of corporations to increase their capital stock. This means that they will be unwilling to do business except at a fairly wide margin of profit. Hence, when the costs of production rise with the increase of wages and interest rates, there is almost certain to be a curtailment of the production in order to continue large dividends. While the trade boom is under way and prices are rising, merchants buy forward in anticipation of further rises in prices, but in doing so they tend to become overstocked. Partly because of this and partly because of the high prices, they begin to hold back orders. This fact impresses the bankers who then restrict their loans still further and impose an additional check on business expansion.

By a series of stages, sometimes slow and sometimes rapid, the boom passes into depression. Firms which have borrowed excessively are threatened with bankruptcy. In order to reduce costs workers are discharged. This reduces buying power, leads to smaller orders, less production and still smaller payrolls. Instead of optimism and confidence, there is an atmosphere of despondency and fear. As prices fall, intending purchasers postpone buying to the last moment in anticipation of further drops. This makes the depression still worse. The retailers hold out longest against the forces which bring on the depression because they are unwilling to sell at a loss goods which they purchased at high prices. After a time, however, the unwillingness of the public to buy and the need for ready money force down retail prices. Gradually stocks of goods are sold out and an actual shortage may appear. During the depression, not only have large numbers of men been thrown out of work, but employers frequently have taken advantage of the opportunity to reduce wage rates. After a time the reduced stocks and the lowered cost of production lead to renewed buying and increased manufacturing.

Business confidence begins to revive, speculators begin to buy stocks and we are once more on the upgrade toward a boom. Something like this seems to occur at more or less regular intervals in every modern industrial country. Such recurring periods of prosperity and depression have been indicated in the data already presented from Great Britain and the United States.

**Economic and Physical Consequences of Unemployment.**

—The various factors involved in the business cycle are so intimately bound together that it is exceedingly difficult, and perhaps quite impossible, to speak of one as cause and another as effect. But from the standpoint of people who work for wages, we are justified in pointing out certain situations and events as definite results of unemployment and business depression. First of all we may speak of the wage loss. The salary and wage payments for the first quarter of 1922 were about \$2,729,000,000 less than in the third quarter of 1920.<sup>7</sup> The average earnings of persons who worked in plants employing over 100 workers fell from \$1,544.00 in 1920 to \$1,112.00 in 1921. In the smaller establishments the wage loss was less but was still significant. Closely correlated with the wage loss is the depletion of savings. In its study of unemployment, the Children's Bureau<sup>8</sup> found that the average amount of savings used per family was \$316, in Springfield, Massachusetts and \$333 in Racine, Wisconsin. Following the stoppage of wages and the depletion of savings came the accumulation of debts. The Children's Bureau discovered that 300 families had assumed an average burden of indebtedness amounting to \$270.

One means of attempting to meet the crises of unemployment of the husband and father is for the wife and mother to seek work. In the Children's Bureau study it was found that almost one-third of the mothers in the families visited were working. Some of these had been employed before the business depression, but the great majority went to work as a result of the husband's unem-

<sup>7</sup> King, *op. cit.*, p. 144.

<sup>8</sup> *Unemployment and Child Welfare*, U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 125.



ployment. Most of them went outside the home and many of them left their children without proper care. The mother's absence frequently meant insufficient breakfast, "pick-up" lunch, neglected housekeeping and unmended clothing. After savings were used up and credit could no longer be secured, the mother's earnings were frequently insufficient and charitable relief had to be accepted. In spite of the fact that a large proportion of the men in Racine and Springfield were skilled workers, sober and industrious, over half of the families found it necessary to receive charitable aid. On the average this happened about four months after the loss of employment and the aid was continued about ten months. Some families sought to reduce their expenses by moving into smaller and cheaper quarters. One family of 12 was reported to have moved twice, each time to a poorer location, finally having to live in two rooms.

Reduction of the diet was another consequence of the 1921 business depression. Chicago social workers reported<sup>9</sup> that meat and fresh milk were dispensed with in a great number of cases. Many families substituted dry beans and peas for fresh vegetables and fruit. In some cases they went so far as to limit the breakfast to black coffee and dry bread. As might be expected this sort of diet led to serious undernourishment and illness. The Visiting Nurse Society of Philadelphia reported an increase of 61 per cent in the number of its patients from December, 1920, to December, 1921. The Cleveland Nutrition Clinic reported on a group of children whose weights were carefully watched during seven months of two consecutive years. Whereas the average gain in 1920-21 was 2 pounds, it was only three-fourths of a pound in 1921-22. The Children's Bureau found illness to have been present in three-fifths of the families which it studied. Not all of this sickness can be attributed directly to unemployment, but it obviously served to complicate the difficulties of the period of business depression.

<sup>9</sup> Klein, Philip, *The Burden of Unemployment*, p. 34.

**Social and Personal Consequences of Unemployment.—**

As we indicated at the outset, most studies of unemployment have been made from the economic point of view. Hence we are without adequate data concerning its effect on personality, family life, neighborhood and community organization and other social groups. The three summaries from the Children's Bureau study showed that unemployment meant to many families loss of security and of social status. Some of the other consequences that may be incurred are suggested by the following excerpts.

Though lowered morale—whether due to unemployment or to other causes—cannot be measured and stated in quantitative terms, it was a persistent phenomenon that permeated every manifestation of the depression. Among the jobless breadwinners of families it took a variety of forms under different circumstances; strain and friction within the family, loss of ambition to seek work, occasionally desertion of family, temperamental upheavals, loss of mental balance even to the point of insanity, development of lawless habits, begging, the fostering of bitterness against the government and social institutions in general, or sheer laziness from the discontinuance of sustained application. This loss of morale complicated every task of the social case worker.<sup>10</sup>

Unsteady employment attacks the worker's efficiency in so many ways that probably no one could enumerate them all. It undermines his physique, deadens his mind, weakens his ambition, destroys his capacity for continuous, sustained endeavor; induces a liking for idleness and self-indulgence; saps self-respect and the sense of responsibility; impairs technical skill; weakens nerve and will power; creates a tendency to blame others for his failure; saps his courage; prevents thrift and hope of family advancement; destroys a workman's feeling that he is taking good care of his family; sends him to work worried and underfed; plunges him into debt.<sup>11</sup>

The first months of unemployment have been tided over by the working man through the savings which the high wages of war years provided. Often he has not come to us until the time of unemployment has extended over a period of nine months or even a year. The average length of time of unemployment has been about five months. When he does finally come to us, we find him restless and confused. During the War he was encouraged to think of himself as vitally important in the industrial world, and

<sup>10</sup> Klein, *op. cit.*, p. 37.

<sup>11</sup> Lescquier, Don D., *The Labor Market*, p. 107.



to raise his standards of social welfare as increased wages made it possible for him to raise them. Now he faces the hardship of economic readjustment and a shirtsleeved position in the social scheme. He has no job or, if he is fortunate enough to have one, it is at a wage which does not permit the standard to which he legitimately advanced during the period of high wages, nor is it sufficient in many instances to meet the continued high cost of living. . . . The nervous and mental strain of a long period of unemployment has been frequently noticed. The necessary curtailment of educational and recreational advantages has lead some young people to amusements of an unwholesome sort which have sometimes had seriously unhappy results. The price for broken homes, ill health, and relaxed moral standards will not all be paid today, but will be paid for in the future by perhaps prolonged care of those who suffer thus from the unemployment situation of today.<sup>12</sup>

The fact that these several statements are not altogether consistent with one another indicates that we have a group of hypotheses to be tested rather than anything like adequate conclusions. But it is beyond question that unemployment does exercise a demoralizing influence both upon individual persons and upon group life. In a paper read before the American Association for Labor Legislation in December, 1924, Stuart Rice pointed out one of the ways in which unemployment may be a case of industrial pathology leading to social pathology. The unemployed man tends to become unemployable. His being out of work may cause physical impairment, loss of clothing and tools and with these an "inferiority complex." He tends to become detached from regular workers and loses his social status. He may presently identify himself with the "army of the unemployed." This new group attachment usually means "lower" standards and an attitude of hostility toward those more fortunate than himself. When "war" has once been declared, the re-establishment of old relationships is exceedingly difficult, if not impossible. Thus personal demoralization is accompanied by social disorganization.

<sup>12</sup> Baltimore Family Welfare Association, *Annual Report, 1921*, pp. 3-4, quoted in Atkins, Willard E., and Lasswell, Harold D., *Labor Attitudes and Problems*, p. 251.

**Suggestions for the Control of Employment.**—Aside from their immediate practical value as possible solutions for the problems of unemployment, the various programs which have been suggested are significant for the light they shed on our present social organization and the corresponding social attitudes. It is with these in mind that we present, without further comment, Bruno Lasker's summary of the principal recommendations of the Mayor's Committee on Unemployment of the City of New York in 1917.<sup>13</sup>

That, however serious an emergency, a sincere effort be made by the public authorities and voluntary agencies responsible for its relief to classify those in need of assistance in some manner not inconsistent with rapidity of action, so as to determine the kind of relief of which the individual is most in need or which is most likely to be appropriate to his capacity for self-help, possession of resources, station in life, family responsibilities, age, health, etc.

That registration at a public employment bureau or at any private commercial, trade or philanthropic employment bureau which is willing to cooperate in a general city scheme, be uniformly adopted as an obligatory test of unemployment, and a condition precedent to payment of out-of-work benefits and relief by gift or loan.

That as a part of the regular machinery of city government there be created an office charged with the three-fold task of:

- (a) maintaining a current survey of the state of employment in the city,
- (b) keeping an up-to-date register of the city's relief resources, both existing and potential, which can be relied upon as elements in a city-wide cooperative system of relief should an emergency occur,
- (c) distributing information to social workers and others to whom persons in need are most likely to apply for advice, enabling them to direct these to the agencies most likely to be able to help them.

That, at a time of abnormal unemployment, the public authorities, influential citizens and the press encourage the benevolent public to support existing agencies equipped to relieve distress

<sup>13</sup> This is reprinted by permission from *How to Meet Hard Times*, Survey, Supplement, Feb. 5, 1921. Other programs for the relief and prevention of unemployment are to be found in *Report of the President's Conference on Unemployment*, 1923; Amer. Lab. Leg. Rev., Sept., 1921; Klein, Philip, *The Burden of Unemployment*, 1923. See also literature on unemployment insurance.



arising from it rather than create new funds and relief organizations.

That measures be taken by the federal government to devise the most practical and effective means of inaugurating a workable system of unemployment insurance (of which a comprehensive system of public employment bureaus is a prerequisite) either through an appropriate federal department or by a congressional commission appointed for the purpose.

That relief employment approximate employment under normal conditions as nearly as possible, as regards the utility of the work done, the assignment of tasks suited to the abilities of the worker and the output expected of him in relation to the wages paid and to the degree of efficiency possible.

That relief employment, as far as possible, be organized only by such agencies as are already in intimate touch with the persons or classes of persons whom it is intended to aid by this means; that relief employment wages be paid at an hourly rate sufficient to cover the minimum cost of living, with, perhaps, a weekly bonus on production.

That the amount of relief given be adequate to insure that the total family resources cover the minimum cost of living.

That smaller neighborhood organizations, more intimately in touch with individuals and families in their respective neighborhoods, be more extensively utilized by the larger relief societies as distributors of their relief grants.

That at times of abnormal unemployment organizations engaging in any form of relief to the unemployed, register all families and individuals assisted in a central confidential exchange.

That relief in kind be made only supplementary to other forms of relief when found expedient to insure adequacy of the total amount of help given to the individual; and that in the allocation of financial and material aid the needs of the family, not only those of the individual person in distress through unemployment, be taken into account.

That shelter for persons made homeless through unemployment, but not permanently belonging to the vagrant class, be provided separately from institutions for the care of the latter; and that in no case homeless minors be provided with shelter in institutions housing a miscellany of adult persons of every description.

That the period of unemployment in the case of minors be utilized for educational advancement by the provision of suitable training, attendance at which for a certain number of hours each week might be made compulsory for all unemployed youths and girls up to the age of eighteen.

That, in order to reduce the supply of juvenile labor at times of general unemployment, school attendance beyond the age limit of legal compulsion be encouraged by the provision of scholarships.

The New York Committee did not content itself with measures of relief but also sought means of preventing unemployment. Their further recommendations are presented herewith.

That the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics and the State Industrial Commission be given sufficient appropriations to enable the creation of a complete statistical "barometer of trade."

That a more wide-spread education of the people in the meaning and effects of financial crises and industrial depression and in the fluctuation of prices, trade activity, and business prospects be made the means of preventing needless panics on the part of the consumers, and of encouraging expenditure, as far as possible, on a normal scale.

That manufacturers prepare against the necessity of closing down or seriously curtailing production at times of depression by developing a production policy which, taking account of fluctuations in demand,—

- (a) plans for the utilization of slack times to introduce new staple lines.
- (b) retards deliveries in good times, as far as possible, so as to have work in hand when the demand slackens.
- (c) diverts permanent additions to buildings, equipment and machinery, and other capital investments, important repairs and additions to stock from busy times to times of depression.
- (d) distributes such employment as there is, if production must be reduced, over as large as possible a proportion of the force by means of short time, without however depressing the earnings of individual employes materially below the minimum necessary to support family life.

That when trade crises threaten, the large financial and business interests cooperate to the fullest possible extent with one another and with the Federal Reserve Board to maintain stability of credit and to allay needless alarm, by wide-spread publicity as to the reassuring elements in the existing business situation.

That the city government, in executing permanent improvements, the appropriations for which have been sanctioned, discriminate in the allotment of funds from current revenue and from corporate stock in accordance with the respective urgency of different expenditures, with the avoidance of waste from loss of interest incurred by delays in bringing improvements into use, with the cost of borrowing, of labor, and of materials, and, finally, with the state of the labor market and the rate of unemployment prevailing in the city, and that, other considerations



apart, the city's expenditure upon such improvements be made as far as possible inverse in total volume to the general rate of employment in the city.

That similarly the federal and state governments be induced to plan public expenditures upon permanent improvements over a period of years, withholding work which is not urgent at times of trade prosperity and speeding it at times of depression.

Here is a program which, on its face, holds out alluring prospects of controlling the conditions of employment. It indicates that much headway has been made toward solution of the technical and economic problems involved. There is only one question left to answer: *Why don't we put such a program into effect?* This is the hardest of all. It—not the others—constitutes the real problem of social control. It involves intelligence, changes of customs and attitudes, modification of institutions, reorganization of our common life. But, as a recent writer has pointed out,<sup>14</sup> we are always trying to find some way of avoiding the undesirable consequences of our established institutions and practices without changing the institutions and practices themselves. We want to eat our cake and yet keep it. We look upon such a situation as unemployment as inviting “an enterprise in finding ways of getting something done or prevented, while not interfering with the rights, interests and activities of all those who are involved in the failure to do, or the persistence in doing, what is the subject of the problem.”<sup>15</sup>

**Insurance Against Unemployment.**—Another program for the control of employment is that of social insurance. It, too, appears to be carefully thought out and on the whole quite “reasonable.” But, in America at least, there are poor prospects of its being put into effect for some time. Again we ask, why? And again we are face to face with the fundamental problem of social control. Is it stupidity, dishonesty, the dominance of individual interests or just plain inertia that prevents the adoption of what seems to be an entirely rational program? With these

<sup>14</sup> Frank, L. K., *Social Problems*, Amer. Jour. Soc., 30: 462-473.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 468.

questions in mind we turn to a consideration of two schemes of unemployment insurance.

The first national scheme of compulsory insurance against unemployment was adopted by Great Britain in 1911. In the beginning its application was limited to seven building and engineering trades, but it has since been expanded to all employed persons over the age of 16 except agricultural workers, domestic servants and a few others. The number insured has risen correspondingly from about 2,000,000 to more than 12,000,000. The whole scheme is administered by the Ministry of Labour in conjunction with the employment exchanges mentioned in the preceding chapter. The expense is shared by employers, employees and the state. The contributions of the first two are handled in the following manner. Employers purchase from a post-office insurance stamps which they affix to unemployment books which all workers in the insured trades are required to present when they are hired. The value of the stamps covers the contribution of both employer and employee, the latter's share being deducted from his wages. The rates of weekly contributions under the 1922 Act are for men as follows: from the employer 10 d., from the employee 9 d., from the state  $6\frac{3}{4}$  d. There are separate and lower rates for women, boys and girls. Benefits are at the rate of 15 s. weekly for an unemployed man and 12 s. for a woman. Workers under 18 receive half-rates. In addition a man may receive 5 s. per week on behalf of his wife and 1 s. for each dependent child. There is a waiting period of six days before benefits become due. To receive the benefit a workman must apply at one of the public employment exchanges, where effort is made, first of all, to find him a position. At the same time notice is sent to his last employer to determine the occasion of his leaving. In case of a dispute over this it may be referred to a court of referees. Otherwise the benefit starts six days after the workman has registered at the exchange. The total amount of benefits paid in the two years ending November, 1922, was nearly 100,000,000 pounds. Because of the unusual and prolonged depression one-sixth of the money for



benefits had to be borrowed from the national treasury. During this same period there was much criticism of the administration, but apparently no one proposed giving up unemployment insurance.<sup>16</sup>

In the United States there have been numerous proposals concerning state insurance against unemployment, but none has yet been enacted into law. But something very similar in principle has appeared in the clothing industry through agreements between unions and employers' associations. The Chicago<sup>17</sup> agreement of 1923 provided for the creation of an unemployment fund out of equal contributions from employers and employes. For each worker the employer was authorized to deduct  $1\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the weekly wage and was required to add thereto a similar amount, the whole to be deposited with a board of trustees established for the purpose of administering this fund. The trustees were chosen in equal numbers by the employers and the union, with the addition of an impartial chairman, who was the only paid member of the board. Within limits set by the formal agreement the board was to determine when the fund had reached an amount sufficient to justify the payment of benefits. The amount of the benefit was to be 40 per cent of the regular weekly wage, but never more than \$20. A waiting period of two weeks was fixed and a limit of five weekly benefits, or \$100, was set for any single year. To receive a benefit a worker must have been a member of the union in good standing for one year during which he made his contributions to the fund. (Until the scheme had been in operation for one year eligibility for benefits was calculated on the basis of membership and contributions from May, 1923.) He would be ineligible for a benefit if he voluntarily left his job, were discharged for cause or declined to accept suitable employment. He would also be ineligible if his unemployment were due to strike or lock-out. As in the British system, the worker

<sup>16</sup> Cohen, J. D., *Insurance by Industry Examined*; also *Insurance Against Unemployment*.

<sup>17</sup> Unemployment Agreement Between Members of the Chicago Industrial Federation of Clothing Manufacturers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, October, 1923.

must register with the employment exchange, which in this case was established by joint agreement between employers and the union. Inasmuch as there is no state or national system of unemployment insurance in the United States this and similar agreements within industry are of very great significance to us.

Again we return to the fundamental question of social control. If such a scheme as this is practicable and effective, why is it not adopted generally? Again we are made painfully aware of our ignorance of the mechanisms of public opinion. We do not yet know how to bring about desired social changes in the way that we manipulate physical, chemical and even biological forces. The glaring discrepancy between what we *know* about unemployment and what we *do* about it reminds us that social control is for the most part *terra incognita*.

#### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Secure such data as are available concerning the last general depression as it affected your home district, *e.g.*, decrease in number of persons on payrolls, changes in the number of persons served by social-work and health agencies, changes in the volume of business, want-ads, requests for loans, etc.
2. Find out what was done to meet the emergency in your city, county and state, *e.g.*, by creation of special committees, funds, provision of public work, expansion of existing social machinery, publicity, etc.
3. Find out what plans have been made (*a*) to meet future emergencies of this character, (*b*) to prevent their recurrence.
4. Study plans for unemployment insurance which have been proposed in this country. Why have attempts to secure necessary legislation failed? Who oppose insurance against unemployment? On what grounds?
5. Interview people of various occupational groups with reference to:
  - a.* Their explanation of unemployment
  - b.* Their notion of the best way to meet it
  - c.* Their conception of prevention
  - d.* Their attitude toward insurance against unemployment



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- See also numerous articles in: American Labor Legislation Review, National Conference of Social Work Proceedings, The Survey,



## CHAPTER XV

### WOMEN IN INDUSTRY

In the case summaries presented in preceding chapters there have been several instances of women "gainfully employed." Mrs. McGregor, whose alcoholic husband had finally disappeared, had charge of a group of saleswomen in a department store. Mrs. Jenkins, a widow, worked in a garment factory, a dairy salesroom, a novelty store and a cafeteria. Mary Wilson Haynes clerked in a department store while she was still attending high school, in order to buy clothes which the family income would not otherwise permit. She took a commercial course and became a stenographer for an oil company. After being disappointed in her married life and breaking with her husband she worked in a shoe store to support herself and baby. Mrs. Newton during her girlhood worked hard on her father's farm when she might better have been in school. After marriage she helped her husband sell balloons at an amusement park. When he deserted she found employment in a laundry. Mrs. Johnson was a school teacher before her marriage. After that, because of her husband's low earnings and failure to use them for the benefit of his family, she worked as a domestic and took in washing. Mrs. Allen worked in an overall factory after leaving school and returned to the same position when her husband was out of work. In the second family described in Chapter XIV the wife and mother went out to do housework and cleaned in a bakery during her husband's unemployment in a business depression. The following brief excerpts will indicate some additional factors that are involved in the employment of women.

1. A very small number of the women included in this survey were working to provide what might be called luxuries for themselves or their families. Typical of this group was the story of one girl who was working as a telephone operator and making an average weekly wage of \$14.17. She gave \$7 a week to her mother, a larger contribution being unnecessary because her father, older sister, and older brother were all working and contributing to the support of the mother and three younger children. Her surplus income, amounting to from \$5 to \$7 a week, was used for clothes and other expenses and to pay \$10 a month for a piano which she was buying on the installment plan, and for two music lessons a week, costing slightly less than 50 cents each.<sup>1</sup>

2. Some of the responsibilities carried by the women living with brothers and sisters are illustrated in the case of a single woman 34 years old who was earning \$12 a week in a department store. She had been self-supporting since she left her farm home eight years before. During this time she had educated one sister and at the time she was interviewed she and two other sisters were helping to put their brother through college and were taking care of a sister who was ill. The three sisters lived together and put all of their earnings into a common fund. So far they had not been able to save anything.<sup>2</sup>

3. One woman who was a sewing-machine operator in a garment factory, making about \$10.50 a week, was supporting both mother and sister. She and her sister together had supported the mother for 24 years, but for several years recently the old lady had become so helpless that the sister was obliged to stay at home to care for her, putting the financial burden of the family entirely on the one worker. They had been able to save some money when the two of them were working, but everything had been spent since the sister had been obliged to give up, and the one wage earner of the family, although she felt she needed a vacation, did not dare to stop as she could not afford to lose her wages. . . .<sup>3</sup>

4. Another woman has been a widow for 18 years and has supported her son since he was a baby. She has had only her work to depend upon, and said she must work very fast as, now that her boy has come back from the war and is in the hospital, she is the sole support of her father who is ill with heart trouble. The old man should not be left alone, but "what else can you do? Last week I had to pay \$5 for his medicine." She works from 7 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., takes just enough time off for lunch, and always stays until one of the last, so that she

<sup>1</sup> U. S. Women's Bur., Bul. No. 17, p. 74.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 64-65.



can earn as much as possible. Saturday she works till 3 or 4 o'clock and then goes home to do her weekly housecleaning. She makes from \$26 to \$29 a week, but "you have to work like mad to do that." She is afraid, too, that she may not be able to keep it up, as she is not as strong as she used to be. . . .<sup>4</sup>

5. Women workers in restaurants often have family financial responsibilities and duties which they must fulfill in the scant hours left them from work. Take the case of one waitress in an Iowa restaurant who had a 7-day week, 78 hours long. She was a woman of 27, with a totally dependent husband and a child, the former in the clutches of tuberculosis. She was given meals in the restaurant for all three, and was paid \$12 a week. In her leisure moments, after putting in a day that averaged over 11 hours, she cared for her family and the rooms in which they lived, and did the sewing and mending and multitudinous other things required of a home-maker.<sup>5</sup>

6. Mrs. ——— did daywork through the summer, but did not like it because it kept her away from the children. She has two children, one 5 and one 4 years old, and another coming in a couple of months. Her husband works in another State and sends money home, but not enough. By working at night she can be with the children and do the housework in the daytime. She sleeps a couple of hours in the morning and a couple in the afternoon. Her sister-in-law stays with the children at night.<sup>6</sup>

7. An Irish woman 30 years of age had two children aged 6 and 3. She worked in one of the meat-packing companies, pasting labels from 7 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. She had entered the eldest child at school but sent her to the nursery for lunch and after school. The youngest was in the nursery all day. She kept her house "immaculately clean and in perfect order," but to do so worked until 11 o'clock every night in the week and on Saturday night she worked until 5 o'clock in the morning. She described her schedule as follows: On Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday she cleaned one room each night; Saturday afternoon she finished the cleaning and put the house in order; Saturday night she washed; Sunday she baked; Monday night she ironed.<sup>7</sup>

8. A similar case was that of the Y's, an American family consisting of the mother and four children, the eldest a boy of 18 unable to work because of congenital heart trouble, and the youngest a boy of 7. The father deserted the family when the eldest child was 12 years of age and the mother tried to support the family. For a time she put two of the children in an insti-

<sup>4</sup> U. S. Women's Bur., Bul. No. 10, p. 29.

<sup>5</sup> U. S. Women's Bur., Bul. No. 19, pp. 31-32.

<sup>6</sup> U. S. Women's Bur., Bul. No. 10, p. 19.

<sup>7</sup> U. S. Children's Bur., Pub. No. 102, p. 43.

tution. After 1916, however, when the family were first known to the United Charities, the mother had all the children with her and supported them with some help from relatives. She worked in a laundry, for a sign company, as a machine operator in a corset factory, as a saleswoman in a delicatessen shop, earning from \$8 to \$9 a week. In April, 1918, she was taken ill and an examination showed that she had tuberculosis in a moderately advanced stage. Two of the children were examined at the same time and proved to have tuberculosis of the glands. A little girl of 11 who had not been examined was reported to faint frequently. The mother stayed at home one month and then returned to work, first as an inspector for the gas company, earning \$11 a week, and when that proved too difficult, she worked in the curling-iron department of a hardware manufacturing concern. At the last report the visiting nurse association was trying to persuade her and the oldest boy to go to a convalescent home for a rest.<sup>8</sup>

9. An American woman had gone to work because of her husband's illness. He was able to work again at the time of this study, but as his health was not good his earnings were irregular. There was only one child in the family, a boy of 7. The mother had comparatively light work as inspector in an underwear factory. She said the place was quiet and her work easy. The hours were from 8 A.M. to 5:30 P.M. with only a half-hour for lunch, and afterwards she had the housework to do, with no assistance. She did her washing at night; some weeks on two different nights, as she was too tired to do it all at one time. She ironed at night whenever she felt able. Saturday afternoon she scrubbed and swept and Sunday she baked. In addition to her regular work she made all her own and her little boy's clothing. She said that she got very tired and nervous; she knew that the little boy often got scolded when he did not deserve it and she had not the time to give him the kind of care she did before she worked. She used to take him to the public playground afternoons, but could not do that after she began to work.<sup>9</sup>

10. Mary's mother, a widow, worked in a tailoring shop at piecework and earned only \$7 a week. There were four children in the family younger than this 10-year-old girl. Before school Mary made the beds, washed the dishes, and took the youngest children, aged 6 and 2, to a day nursery. She had her lunch at the nursery, but after school she went home to do the housework. One day in the week, "most any day," she did the washing. Other days she did only the routine tasks, but no cooking. Saturday she scrubbed and swept and ironed. Sunday morning

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 46.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.



she finished the ironing if she did not get through Saturday. The investigator described Mary as an unresponsive, careworn child who had no time for play and seemed scarcely to know the meaning of the term. She was ironing when the visitor called, while her mother was talking with the neighbors. It is only fair to the mother to say that she had been employed for only a year; that this was her first experience in industrial employment, and that she found the work hard and fatiguing.<sup>10</sup>

Truly a varied array of situations is presented by these ten summaries. The immediate occasions of seeking employment were widowhood, desertion, invalidism of husband or some other member of the family, husband's low income, desire to further the education of a brother or sister, desire for "luxuries." Stated in other terms, these women went to work to meet personal or family crises. In every case except No. 1, the worker's own livelihood depended on her earnings. In all except No. 1 and No. 2 the livelihood of others in the family was similarly at stake, although in No. 6 and No. 9 the husband also was working. With most of these women the problem had reduced itself to providing bare subsistence and keeping the family together—"security" and "response," according to Thomas' categories.<sup>11</sup> No. 1 is the only instance of an expressed desire for "new experience" and "recognition," the media being music and good clothes.

Not only did the "crises" differ; there was considerable variety in the degree of success in meeting these situations (adjustment or accommodation). No. 1 appears to represent a successful accommodation; the girl seems to have been getting what she wanted. No. 2 is an instance of temporary adjustment apparently working very well. Its instability lies in the fact that there were no savings; the family organization might easily go to pieces in some new crisis. What the original difficulty was in No. 7 we are not told, but the woman seems to have reorganized her

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>11</sup> For various statements of the "wishes" see Thomas, W. I., *The Unadjusted Girl*, Chap. I; Thomas, W. I., and Znaniecki, F., *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 3: 5-81; Park, R. E., and Burgess, E. W., *An Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, pp. 478-490.

scheme of life so as to meet it rather well for the time being. However, this accommodation, like that in No. 2, seems likely to break down, for unless the woman be a veritable Amazon, she must presently use up her strength through overwork. No. 3 pictures a family which had successfully met the crisis involved in the father's death; but when the mother's health failed, another adjustment had to be made. This last accommodation was evidently less satisfactory, for it involved a lowered income along with (probably) increased expenditures. Also the inadequacy of the arrangement was manifested in the worker's need of a vacation which she dared not take. No. 8 is a case of meeting one crisis by means which helped to bring on another even more serious problem situation. When the father deserted, immediate needs were provided for by the mother's going to work. But this meant an excessive demand on her physical reserves and neglect of the children, so that the result was a break in the health of the whole family.

In several of these excerpts we catch a glimpse of the damage to personality which may be wrought by industrial employment of a woman who already has heavy responsibilities at home. In No. 4 the woman "had to work like mad"; she feared she might not be able to keep up the pace; she had no leisure in which to pursue other interests than bare subsistence and the care of her invalid father. In terms of Thomas' classification of the wishes, "new experience" and "recognition" were denied to her; she had only a precarious hold on "security" and "response." Her greatest efforts made possible only a hand-to-mouth existence; they were no guarantee of a continuing income or of extended life for her father and son. In No. 10 we have a hint of the demoralization of a working mother and a vivid picture of the stunted personal development of her ten-year-old daughter. This girl was described as "an unresponsive, careworn child who had no time for play and seemed scarcely to know the meaning of the term."

In order to see whether the examples we have cited are



at all typical we shall consider some statistical and other data indicating why women work, how many are employed, the conditions under which they labor, including wages, hours and irregularities of employment. From these data we shall realize that, as circumstances vary, participation in industry has varying effects upon the personalities of the women and of their children, upon their relations to family and to community.

**Why Women Work.**—There are a number of popular theories about the employment of women whose fallacy is pretty thoroughly demonstrated by recent investigations of the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor. One is that most women work only for "pin money" and are not really dependent upon their wages. Another is that women prefer the factory to housework. A third holds that for women industry is merely a "lunch counter" between school and marriage. Now, as a matter of fact, there are some women who work for "pin money," others who really prefer factory jobs, and still others who do use a place in factory, office or store as a place to wait for marriage. But it seems to be established that these are minor reasons for the presence of women in industry. Studies made by the Women's Bureau confirm the impression gained from the case summaries we have considered, namely, that women work because they need the money, not only for themselves, but also for the support of children and other members of their families. There is also considerable evidence that the employment of women during the War has permanently increased the number in certain industries.<sup>12</sup> A study in Passaic, N. J., indicates that immigration may be a factor.<sup>13</sup> Finally, we suspect that the words "feminism" and "the woman movement" connote a number of important though not very clearly defined causes.

**Home Responsibilities of Working Women.**—A recent bulletin of the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor <sup>14</sup> presents the results of an investigation

<sup>12</sup> Women's Bureau, Bul. No. 12, pp. 34-35.

<sup>13</sup> Women's Bureau, Bul. No. 23, pp. 10-13.

<sup>14</sup> Women's Bureau, Bul. No. 30, esp. p. 12, ff.

in Manchester, N. H., and compares these with the findings in 51 other studies made by a great variety of agencies, public and private. In Manchester it was found that practically every gainfully employed married woman whose husband was working contributed all her earnings to the family. Sixty per cent of the daughters living at home with their parents contributed all their earnings to the families. Besides these, there was found to be a fairly large group of women who did not live at home, but who still bore some of the burdens of family support. Of the whole number of women reported in the miscellaneous studies more than half stated that they contributed all their earnings to their families.

Although their findings can not be considered to be final, in all of these reports one conclusion is inescapable. It is that in general women are wage earners not only for their own entire support but to meet a very definite responsibility as sharers in the support of others or the maintenance of higher standards of living in their families. The burden of responsibility assumed by women is very different from that of men. It is older people who look to women for assistance and support, and usually there is no alternative for the wage earning woman who falls heir to responsibilities not of her own choosing. On the other hand, the man is usually responsible for a young and rising generation, whose support he has undertaken deliberately and whose burden becomes lighter as the years advance. These differences are natural and unavoidable, but they emphasize the necessity for a clearer understanding and a more equitable valuation of the wage-earning woman as an economic factor in the family.<sup>15</sup>

We shall not take the time and space here to comment upon this table, but urge the reader to analyze it with great care. We wish only to add two or three points of explanation. First, there was a change in the date of enumeration from April 15, in 1910 to January 1, in 1920—from a very busy farming season to a time of the year when all farming activities are at their lowest ebb. Second, the nature of the instructions to census enumerators in 1910 was such as to produce an overstatement of the number of women in agriculture. Third, there has been a great decrease in

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.



the employment of girls 10 to 15 years of age, probably because of compulsory school attendance and child labor laws.

NUMBER OF WORKING WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES

Number and Proportion of all Women, 10 Years of Age and Over Engaged in Each General Division of Occupations, 1920 and 1910.<sup>16</sup>

General Division of Occupations	1920		1910	
	Number of Women	Per Cent of Women 10 Years of Age and Over	Number of Women	Per Cent of Women 10 Years of Age and Over
<i>Population, 10 years of age and over....</i>	40,449,346	100.0	34,552,712	100.0
<i>All occupations.....</i>	8,549,511	21.1	8,075,772	23.4
<i>Agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry.....</i>	1,084,128	2.7	1,807,501	5.2
<i>Nonagricultural Occupations.....</i>	7,465,383	18.5	6,268,271	18.1
<i>Extraction of minerals.....</i>	2,864	.....	1,094	
<i>Manufacturing and mechanical.....</i>	1,930,341	4.8	1,820,570	5.3
<i>Transportation.....</i>	213,054	.5	106,625	.3
<i>Trade.....</i>	667,792	1.7	468,088	1.4
<i>Public service (not elsewhere classified).....</i>	21,794	.1	13,558	
<i>Professional service.....</i>	1,016,498	2.5	733,891	2.1
<i>Domestic and personal service.....</i>	2,186,924	5.4	2,531,221	7.3
<i>Clerical occupations.....</i>	1,426,116	3.5	593,224	1.7

**Conditions of Work Place.**—The physical conditions under which women work are sometimes exceedingly pleasant and healthful; at other times they are quite the opposite. A study made in 1921 of 151 Kentucky plants

<sup>16</sup> U. S. Women's Bur., Bul. No. 27, p. 8.

employing women disclosed conditions that are of the less pleasing variety.<sup>17</sup> In 59 establishments cleaning was rated unsatisfactory. Ventilation was considered inadequate in 32, chiefly because of failure to solve special problems of dust, lint and humidity. Lighting was criticized in 46 plants because of glare or insufficient light. Eleven had no seats whatever for women; 43 others had no seats for women with standing jobs; 65 had an insufficient number of seats for all women workers; and 46 had makeshift arrangements of stools and benches without backs. In 49 establishments there was danger of cuts, burns, infections or colds that seemed preventable. In 27, machinery, belts, or elevator shafts were unguarded. In a considerable number of places there was an unnecessary occupational strain from lifting, posture, speeding or pressure. In 99 there were fire hazards such as doors opening inward, narrow aisles or stairways, obstructed exits or lack of fire escapes. In 109 plants drinking facilities were lacking entirely or consisted of common cup or insanitary type of bubble fountain. In 132 establishments the company failed to provide hot water, soap or individual towels, in some cases all three. Toilets were criticized in 133 plants, because of improper cleaning or ventilation, inadequate screening or equipment, inconvenient location, insufficient number, or lack of separate toilets for men and women. The record of service facilities disclosed: no lunch room, 99; hot food obtainable in only 16; no cloak room, 26; cloak rooms inadequate as to equipment, cleaning or ventilation, 70; no rest room, 88; rest room inadequate, 35; no first-aid equipment, 29; inadequate, 41; nurse in attendance in only 2; physical examination required in only 4; no centralized employment system, 53; a definite employment manager in only 7 establishments.

It is not implied that the conditions discovered in Kentucky are typical of the entire United States. Other studies have revealed very different conditions, but defects of the types indicated above are still to be found in a large ma-

<sup>17</sup> Women's Bureau, Bul. No. 29.



jority of the states. Many individual employers and corporations take great pains to provide a suitable work place, while others give no consideration to the most elementary requirements of health or decency.

**MEDIAN WEEKLY WAGE OF WOMEN WORKERS**

Data from Various Studies of the Women's Bureau of the  
United States Department of Labor

City or State	Median Weekly Wage	Type of Workers	Year	Number of Workers Reporting
Alabama.....	\$8.80	White	1922	4,868
“.....	6.05	Negro	1922	757
Missouri.....	12.65	White	1922	15,364
“.....	6.00	Negro	1922	1,536
New Jersey.....	14.95	.....	1922	34,655
Arkansas.....	11.60	White	1922	2,636
“.....	8.85	Negro	1922	481
Georgia.....	12.20	White	1921	5,826
“.....	6.20	Negro	1921	1,277
Kentucky.....	10.75	White	1921	7,426
“.....	8.35	Negro	1921	1,253
South Carolina.....	9.50	White	1921	8,595
“.....	5.80	Negro	1921	611
Chicago.....	14.65	Candymakers	1921	1,832
St. Louis.....	11.95	Candymakers	1921	579
Rhode Island.....	16.85	.....	1920	10,352
Kansas.....	11.95	.....	1920	4,329
Philadelphia.....	10.30	Candymakers	1919	1,246
Bridgeport.....	4.80	Homeworkers	1919	100

The above figures need to be supplemented by a statement of the annual earnings, which are almost always considerably less than 52 times the weekly wage. Unfortunately these are even more difficult to obtain than are the weekly wages. However, in some of its more recent studies the Women's Bureau has succeeded in learning the annual earnings of a small number. These are presented summarily in the table which follows. It is perhaps unnecessary to state that the term “median” means that one-half the workers received less and one-half received more than the amount indicated.

### MEDIAN YEARLY EARNINGS OF WOMEN WORKERS

Data from Various Studies of the Women's Bureau of the  
United States Department of Labor

State	Median Yearly Earnings	Type of Workers	Year	Number of Workers Reporting
New Jersey.....	\$811	.....	1922	2,938
Missouri.....	748	White	1922	1,972
Alabama.....	502	White	1921	961
“.....	324	Negro	1921	97
South Carolina.....	605	White	1921	833
Kentucky.....	618	White	1921	667
“.....	442	Negro	1921	61

In the Kansas study<sup>18</sup> records were obtained for 1,100 women who worked 50 or more weeks during the year 1919-20. Of these, 29 per cent earned less than \$600, 42 per cent earned \$600 but less than \$900, while 29 per cent earned \$900 or more. The annual earnings of the entire group of women workers would be lower than these, because, as we shall presently see, a large number work irregularly and lose a good deal of time in the course of a year. It should also be remembered that both the weekly and the yearly earnings have fallen off considerably since 1920. But even the larger earnings of the selected group in 1920 left many without an income adequate to supply their ordinary wants. A cost-of-living survey made by the Women's Division of the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations in 1920-21 indicated that an annual income of \$880 was needed to provide the minimum of goods and services acceptable to large numbers of working women.<sup>19</sup> This made no provision for dependents. But practically 70 per cent (including those with dependents) were earning less than this amount at the time specified.

<sup>18</sup> Women's Bureau, Bul. No. 17, p. 49.

<sup>19</sup> Kansas Court of Industrial Relations, *Cost of Living Survey*, p. 40.



SCHEDULED DAILY HOURS OF WORK FOR WOMEN

Data from Various Studies of the Women's Bureau of the  
United States Department of Labor

State or City	Year	Total Women Studied	Per Cent of Women Scheduled for		
			Less than 9 Hrs.	9 Hrs. and Less than 10 Hrs.	10 Hrs. and Over
Alabama.....	1922	5,643	23.3	23.3	53.4
Missouri.....	1922	16,897	47.9	52.1	0
New Jersey.....	1922	34,629	60.3	34.4	5.4
Maryland (outside of Baltimore).....	1921	3,045	22.9	65.4	11.7
Baltimore.....	1921	10,332	67.0	30.8	2.2
Georgia.....	1921	6,938	12.7	23.0	64.3
Chicago (candymakers)..	1921	1,935	62.1	37.8	0
St. Louis (candymakers)..	1921	618	24.8	75.2	0
Virginia.....	1920	18,011	33.6	20.2	46.2
Iowa.....	1920	9,906	57.3	34.3	10.3
Indiana.....	1918	12,300	13.6	63.4	23.0

The foregoing tables deserve very careful study which should be followed by an analysis of the original reports from which the figures are taken. Detailed comment, however will not be offered here. We only wish to call attention to the fact that scheduled hours frequently do not coincide with the hours actually worked. Often there is overtime and still more often time is lost because of various irregularities. When we remember that a large proportion of these working women have home duties, the seriousness of the long hours permitted or required in various industries and states becomes apparent. But even if there were no cooking, washing, or cleaning to do and no children to care for outside of working hours, the long day would leave

little time or energy for reading or the more sociable forms of recreation.

### SCHEDULED WEEKLY HOURS OF WORK FOR WOMEN

Data from Various Studies of the Women's Bureau of the  
United States Department of Labor

State or City	Year	Total Women Studied	Per Cent of Women Scheduled for			
			48 Hrs. or Less	Over 48 and Under 54 Hrs.	54 and Under 60 Hrs.	60 Hrs. and Over
Alabama.....	1922	5,701	12.7	21.6	52.5	13.2
Missouri.....	1922	16,724	32.2	58.0	9.7	0
New Jersey.....	1922	34,615	55.2	36.4	8.3	0
Georgia.....	1921	6,938	1.6	23.6	46.9	27.9
Maryland (outside Baltimore) .....	1921	2,978	16.3	67.9	15.6	0.1
Baltimore.....	1921	10,326	68.6	28.7	2.6	
Chicago (candymakers)...	1921	1,935	65.1	34.9	0	0
St. Louis (candymakers)...	1921	618	17.7	27.6	54.7	0
Virginia.....	1920	17,981	19.3	39.7	38.1	2.2
Rhode Island.....	1920	9,934	53.5	40.0	6.5	0

**Night Work.**—In years gone by night work was rather common, but now it has disappeared from most industries, and but few of those who work at night are women. However, instances have been found in places and industries as diverse as the cotton mills of South Carolina and the candy factories of Chicago.

The supposed lure of night work for women and their reasons for engaging therein, is well illustrated by the story told by one Chicago worker. She was the mother of four children, the oldest being 12 years old, the youngest too small to go to school. As her husband had lost his position during the industrial depression and had been able to get only an occasional odd job, the wife had become the main support of the family. Answering a newspaper advertisement for women night workers she had got a job in a candy factory, working from 7 P.M. to 5:30 A.M. for 5



nights a week. At first she had been pleased, thinking she would be able to look after her children during the day and earn about \$15 a week by working at night. After a time, however, she had found that she could not stand the work, on account of the long hours and her inability to sleep during the day. She had arrived home too late in the morning to get any sleep before the children got up and had found it practically impossible to sleep during the day with the children running back and forth. "It was a case of quit or break down," she said.<sup>20</sup>

**Irregular Employment.**—One of the most outstanding features of the employment of women is its irregularity. We pointed out in a previous chapter that the labor turnover is much higher for women workers than for men. In addition to frequent changing of jobs, women lose much time because of the seasonal character of the industries in which they are employed, and also because of daily and weekly irregularities in various establishments. In her study of the millinery trade in New York Miss Van Kleeck found that less than 8 per cent were employed more than 48 weeks. As many as 40 per cent appeared on the payroll four weeks or less in the calendar year.<sup>21</sup> In wholesale shops the number employed during the dullest week fell to 55 per cent of the average for the year; and the total wages fell to 47 per cent of the average, indicating, possibly, discharge of the better-paid workers, reduction of wage rates or part time employment.<sup>22</sup>

A study made by the Women's Bureau in Rhode Island in 1920 showed that 44 per cent of the 6,600 women reported were working less than the scheduled number of hours per week. Of those working undertime 25 per cent lost more than 10 hours and 27 per cent lost between 5 and 10 hours. On the other hand, 12 per cent of the 6,600 worked overtime; but only 11 per cent of the overtime workers exceeded the scheduled number of hours by more than 5.<sup>23</sup> It should be remembered that this study was

<sup>20</sup> Women's Bureau, Bul. No. 25, p. 19.

<sup>21</sup> Of course, many of these women were also employed in other industries. These figures indicate the degree of irregularity rather than the amount of employment.

<sup>22</sup> Van Kleeck, Mary, *A Seasonal Industry*.

<sup>23</sup> Women's Bureau, Bul. No. 21, pp. 62-63.

made after the industrial depression set in. Ordinarily there would be less undertime and more overtime, but irregularity of some sort seems always to be present.

**Home Work.**—In 1919 the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor made a study of 100 families in which work was done at home for factories in Bridgeport, Connecticut. The results are summarized in the following words: <sup>24</sup>

- a. The majority of the workers are foreign born.
- b. The families are large and the children so young as to make the employment of mothers outside the home difficult.
- c. The father is either not contributing to the family income or his earnings are too low to support the family. This results in economic pressure which compels the mother to contribute to the family support often by taking in lodgers as well as by work at home for the factories.
- d. The earnings from home work are very low, however, and constitute merely a supplementary income in spite of the fact that several members of the household often take part in the work. This seems to be due to two main causes, (1) low rates of pay and (2) the small output of an unsupervised process and the general inefficiency of the entire homework system, requiring, as it does, that the workers shall take time to call for the goods at the factory and deliver them after they are completed, while also the worker is constantly interrupted by home duties and lacks the stimulus of a well-organized factory department to make possible effective production.
- e. Children work at ages when their employment in factories is prohibited by law. This results in depriving them of recreation which they need and is often reflected in irregular attendance or a lower standing in school.
- f. From the point of view of public health the danger is always great that work may be done while members of the family are ill from contagious or infectious diseases and this danger is increased by the crowded conditions in the home of the typical home worker.

Other reports call further attention to the disruption of home life, the shifting of rents (interest, strictly speaking) from the factory owner to the worker, the cutting of wage rates of factory workers, and other aspects of these

<sup>24</sup> Women's Bureau, Bul. No. 9, p. 9.



“sweated” industries. Home work of the kind indicated is forbidden by the laws of ten states, but it is well known that these laws are not thoroughly enforced. Moreover, dress-making and laundry work done in the home are quite without regulation, although they sometimes have equally disastrous effects.

**Effects of the Employment of Women.**—We know of no comprehensive study of the effects of women’s participation in modern industry. However, there are some results which seem to be fairly established and others which may be stated more tentatively. For convenience we shall classify these as physical, personal and domestic. First let us consider physical effects. It should be admitted at the outset that there is no reason for believing that the results of a great deal of the work done by women are other than beneficial. However, what one woman can stand may be too much for another, and some kinds of work are very fatiguing for all women. This is especially apt to be the case where there are long hours, heavy lifting, much bending, bad air, glaring light, high speed and other forms of strain. It is pretty generally agreed that night work involves a hazard to health. Also early morning and late afternoon hours work hardships on women who have home duties. Employment too near the time of child-birth—either before or after—is known to be physically harmful. Some work exposes to occupational diseases and accidents.

But we are more concerned with the effects of industry on the personality of women workers. There is no doubt that some kinds of work widen a woman’s vision, extend her range of interests and increase her capacity for work and for enjoyment. It is frequently possible for a woman to find a richer experience in industry than in the home. On the other hand, a large amount of work is so monotonous that initiative is stifled and the joy of workmanship is crushed. When fatigue is coupled with monotony the worker becomes a drudge. When hours are long or work is otherwise wearying, no time or strength is left for reading, music, theater, visiting friends or other means of mental and social development. On the other hand, there are

some jobs which do not demand so much of the woman, but which seem often to promote an attitude of selfish indulgence. Not infrequently the woman worker is exposed to the advances of unscrupulous men. To some this is a stimulus to misconduct, to others it is rather a disagreeable affront. But in contrast with all these hazards, it should be remembered that industry sometimes contributes in no small way to the development of a woman's personality.

Finally, there are what may be termed domestic results of the employment of women. Many kinds of work not only do not prepare for home-making, but may even interfere with getting needed training in child care, cookery, sewing, house decoration and budget-making. In the case of young unmarried women this may be a serious matter. The independent income probably contributes to instability of family life. It does not seem to prevent marriage, but rather to make the woman more ready to break an unsatisfactory marriage bond. The employment of a mother or sister may make it possible to keep a family together. Sometimes this produces a net profit, in the sense of an adequate adjustment, but in other cases there are large debit items of broken health, unsupervised children and lowered morale which may more than offset the economic self-support.

As we noted at the beginning of the chapter, when a woman goes to work it is part of her effort to meet some crisis. Sometimes it enables her to effect a fairly complete and permanent adjustment. Sometimes it seems to solve no problems at all. More frequently it appears to be only part of a temporary accommodation which may break down at almost any time.

**The Children of Wage-Earning Mothers.**—What happens to the children of wage-earnings mothers has been the subject of at least two important investigations. The Children's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor made a study from 1918 to 1920 of 843 working mothers and their 2,066 children. Their findings were that (1) A mother who is working away from home can not care for her children properly. (2) Other provision is usually inadequate. (3) The strain of the dual responsibility for



earning and for home-making interferes with the mother's care of her children. (4) Ill health and fatigue present additional complications. (5) Irregular school attendance and retardation are associated with the mother's employment. (6) Delinquency is sometimes a concomitant. (7) The mother's employment frequently does not bring the family income up to an adequate amount; thus her earnings do not compensate for the loss of her personal attention to the children.<sup>25</sup>

In 1920 the Women's Bureau made a similar study in Passaic, New Jersey. Among their findings are the following data as to the care of young children.<sup>26</sup>

Mother kept store, cared for children at the same time .....	22
Mother worked nights, cared for children in day time .....	107
Paid custodian to care for young children..	25
Relative .....	2
Hired woman .....	4
Day nursery .....	3
Neighbor .....	16
Relatives looked after children.....	93
Living at home.....	66
Living near .....	27
Landlady or boarders looked after children.	35
Neighbors cared for children.....	68
Husband "kept eye on children".....	54
Worked nights, home during day.....	44
Worked at home or unable to work....	10
Children cared for each other.....	118
All from 7 to 14 years.....	82
Some under 7, others from 7 to 14 in same family .....	34
All under 5 years.....	2
	<hr/> 522

Many of these children doubtless fared well as to health, schooling, play and general development. But, reading

<sup>25</sup> Children's Bureau, Pub. No. 102, *Children of Wage-Earning Mothers*.

<sup>26</sup> Women's Bureau, Bul. No. 23, p. 42.

between the lines, we seem to see many others growing up with an exaggerated sense of freedom, without a sense of security and deprived of affection. We suspect that some were being demoralized by irregularity of meals, schooling and personal attention.

**Women in Trade Unions.**—No matter what may have been the original reasons for a woman's going to work, she is likely to find numerous occasions for dissatisfaction with her employment. Some of these, as we have already noted, are long hours, low wages, excessive strain and domineering attitudes of foremen. Moreover, the individual woman is usually unable to solve the problems which these conditions present. Women, like men, are very frequently unable to effect a successful accommodation in industry except through team work. One might anticipate, therefore, that they would turn naturally to trade unionism as a means of mutual defense and improvement. But for the most part this has not happened. Among the reasons are: (1) the fact that most women are not continuously employed in industry for an extended time—they alternate between home and factory; (2) the antagonism of employers; (3) lack of cooperation from the men's unions; (4) low wages and lack of other material means for organization; (5) the character of women's occupations—in each industry women form seldom more than a section of semi-skilled or unskilled workers, among whom trade unionism has always been slow to develop; (6) tradition—it is not considered "nice" for women to engage in those activities essential to the successful promotion of trade unionism. Nevertheless, increasing numbers of women are becoming organized, sometimes by themselves, sometimes in unions with men. Among the organizations in which considerable numbers of women are found are the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, Hotel and Restaurant Employees' International Alliance and the Laundry Workers' International Union. In not a few cases these unions have been successful in improving the wages and working conditions of their members. In this connection mention should be made of the Women's Trade Union League, which is prac-



tically a federation of trade unions with women members. Its aims are stated in the following words:

To provide a common meeting ground for women of all groups who endorse the principles of democracy and wish to see them applied to industry.

To encourage self-government in the workshop.

To develop leadership among the women workers, inspiring them with a sense of personal responsibility for the conditions under which they work.

To insure the protection of the younger girls in their efforts for better working conditions and a living wage.

To secure for girls and women equal opportunity with boys and men in trades and technical training and pay on the basis of occupation and not on the basis of sex.

To secure the representation of women on industrial tribunals and public boards and commissions.

To interpret to the public generally the aims and purposes of the trade union movement.<sup>27</sup>

For women workers more gains seem to have been won through legislation than through trade unionism. The reasons for this appear to be, in addition to the difficulties already named, the relative ease of making a sentimental appeal to legislators on behalf of the "weaker" sex. "Sob stories" are especially effective when the heroines are working mothers with young children. Doubtless, law-makers derive a sense of self-satisfaction from voting for a bill to regulate the working conditions of women. Even the employers, who are not noted for promoting labor legislation, apparently prefer legal control to strong trade unions. Perhaps this is because they count on being able to manipulate the legal machinery in their own interests. But, whatever the reasons may be, there are in many states laws to regulate the hours, wages and general working conditions of women in industry.<sup>28</sup>

Other legal and extra-legal devices which may be helpful in meeting the crises of a working woman's life are mothers' pensions, social insurance, day nurseries and higher wages

<sup>27</sup> Henry, Alice, *Women and the Labor Movement*, p. 113.

<sup>28</sup> For detailed information concerning these laws see: U. S. Women's Bur., Bul. No. 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 16; Commons, J. R., and Andrews, J. B., *Principles of Labor Legislation*, Chaps. IV, V, VII.

for men.<sup>29</sup> In some cases these would make it unnecessary for mothers of young children to seek employment. In others they would lighten the burden of self-support. Hence for our present stage of social and economic development it is proper to count these among the resources which facilitate the making of successful personal and family adjustments.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write the stories of some working women or girls whom you know. Include: why they work, wages, hours, other conditions of employment, home responsibilities, relation of work to personal development and to family relationships.
2. Visit some establishments employing women. Report on light, air, seats, special hazards, fire protection, drinking water, toilets, rest rooms, cloak rooms and lockers, lunch rooms, first aid equipment, personnel work, hours, wages, training.
3. Study the laws of your state regulating the employment of women. How do they compare with the standards set forth in Bul. No. 3 of the U. S. Women's Bureau?
4. Read recent reports of your State Department of Labor and reports of special investigations of women in industry in your own or some neighboring state. Note especially the machinery for enforcement of labor legislation.
5. Collect data bearing on the question: Under what circumstances is it desirable that women should be employed outside the home?
6. Learn what provisions are made locally for care of children of working women. Visit a day nursery; report on equipment, method of admission, personnel, care of children, correlation with other social agencies, homes from which children come.
7. Discover what facilities your city or state provides for the vocational guidance and training of girls. Interview someone in charge of this work. Visit a school or class in which vocational training is given.
8. Find out what part women take in the trade-union movement in your state. Compare this with some state in which more women are active members of unions. What differences are there as to working conditions? How far are the unions responsible for superior conditions?

<sup>29</sup> As in other chapters we are not discussing the various types of social treatment in any detail. It is our intention to stress in each chapter one or more phases of social control which have not received special attention in preceding chapters.



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## CHAPTER XVI

### CHILD LABOR

The case summaries and the discussions of preceding chapters have called our attention to numerous instances of the employment of children. But because this was only one, and frequently a minor, factor in rather complicated situations, we devoted rather little attention to its significance. Thus we found William Jenkins, aged 13, working at various times as office boy, delivery boy and paper carrier. George and Carrie Fields, aged 13 and 10, were peddling lace and coat hangers on the streets of small towns. Paul Downing at the age of 12 was employed in a factory. His brother, Stanley, who was only 9 years old, worked as soda boy in a candy store. All these children were doubtless adding something to the family income, although the amount was quite certainly small. So far as we are aware, the work which was done by William Jenkins did not interfere with his schooling, health or play. The Fields children, however, were obviously being exploited by their parents and were apparently developing "anti-social" attitudes. The Downing boys were so upset by their disorganized home life that it is difficult to tell just what their employment did mean to them. Mary, described in the chapter immediately preceding, was not working for wages; but in her own home this ten-year-old girl was cooking, washing, ironing, sweeping and caring for four younger children. As a consequence she was "an unresponsive, careworn child who had no time for play"; her school work must have been rather futile and her health was quite certainly being undermined. In all these instances of children at work the most significant fact is not their "gainful employment," but the development or lack of development of wholesome personalities.

In the current, rather heated discussions of child labor a number of very interesting attitudes are being displayed. In many respects they are much like those which have been focused upon women in industry. It is assumed, on the one hand, that women and children should be protected against all contact with productive enterprises. Some men seem to derive great satisfaction from the consciousness that their womenfolk and children are dependent upon them. Others, having had a rather hard childhood themselves, are determined that their own offspring shall travel an easier path. Women, even more than men, wax sentimental about rescuing boys and girls from the evils of child labor. Over against these attitudes we find those of stern parents and employers who insist that early employment is good for children; they are "better off in a factory than running the streets"; it's a "wonderful preparation for life"; they need to "learn the value of a dollar"; their fathers went to work at a tender age and they have turned out well, etc., etc. Added to these are the sentimental vagaries of those who believe that child laborers do and should support widowed mothers, crippled fathers and underpaid adults. The difficulty with both sides is that they are treating the employment of children as something inherently good or bad. There has been rather little analysis of the relation of child labor to the development of personality and of social groups.<sup>1</sup>

"BERRIES IS BERRIES"<sup>2</sup>

A caravan of wagons, covered and uncovered, was crossing a creek. Some were filled with rolls of bedding and clothing, with dilapidated grips, suitcases, and bulging telescopes, with crates containing smoky coffee pots, frying pans, and heavy dishes, the worse for wear; while from the front, the rear, and from the uplifted sides of the prairie schooners appeared tousled heads, yellow, brown,

<sup>1</sup> A notable exception to this is Fuller, Raymond G., *Child Labor and the Constitution*.

<sup>2</sup> Bradley, Frances Sage, *Berries Is Berries*, Nation, 119: 597-8. Copyrighted by the Nation; reprinted by permission.



tawny, of a score of youngsters consumed with curiosity, for they were seeing the world.

The procession was held up temporarily by an obstreperous pony, who, as one of the rear team of a four-horse wagon, was expected to fall into line and learn how to travel in harness. He refused, however, to do his part, and apparently neither he nor his master knew the rules of the game. Frightened, protesting, pursued by the lashes and oaths of the combined drivers of several teams, his sides frothing, and a bloody gash on his back luring a persistent, merciless horse-fly, the poor beast at least furnished his share of excitement. In spite of his three steady mates, the wagon swayed and tilted in the heavy sand. The load of children careened this way and that and clutched the sides of the wagon. The older ones dropped out behind and trudged barefoot beside the men, swelling the grand whoopla to urge on the panicky pony.

"What is it all about? Well, we're a tryin' ter git ter the berry fiel's but this durn pony is boun' he won't pull. I'll show him whether he will or no," and a stinging lash across the legs brought only another toss of the head and a wild dash to the other side of the road in a frantic effort to evade the next onslaught of the exasperated driver. "We hev'n't made mo'n fifteen miles today," he complained, "but I'll say we'll do better'n thet tomorrow. Berries is ready ter pick an' we've got ter be in the fiel's by Friday."

Finally, seduced with a bribe of cigarettes, the men ceased hostilities for a time, giving the frantic animal a chance to steady his nerves and to secure a much-needed rest.

"Well, yes," in answer to a question, "of co'se most of 'em is school chillen, but schools close when berry season opens. Yer see berries is berries an' the crap hes ter be made right now. School begins again in July an' lasts till fodderin' time, cep' fer them ez hez ter chop cotton. An' arter thet, ther's nothin' mo' ter hinder 'em till pickin' time in October an' November."

"Where are the parents of so many children? Do they pick berries too?"

"Well, hardly," smiling. "Berry pickin' is the back-breakin'est work yer ever tried. Hit's wussen cotton pickin' on grown folks, 'specially men. Ther backs is too stiff fer sech work. Hit's jes suited ter women an' chillen. Yes o' co'se they hez ter ben' too, but hit don' lame 'em up like it does us men, an' somehow they seems ter stan' it better. Mr. Donaghey here picks on contrac' fer the M an' N Packin' an' Preservin' Company, an' we uses only chillen fer the pickin'. The big boys stays in the shack with Mr. Donaghey an' Mrs. Simpson yonder tries ter keep the little fellers out o' mischief."

"Do they like to go? Are there any repeaters, children going the second or third year to the berry fields?"

"Oh well, you know how chillen is. They're crazy about it till they fin's they hez ter stay on the job. Hit's lucky fer them they hez parents who knows what's good fer 'em. These kids 'd be tearin' all over the place eatin' ther haid off ef they wuz at home while now they're mekin' money, an' ther folks needs it.

"How much do they earn? Well that depen's. Sometimes they picks by the row, but mos' gene'ally they picks by the box, 2 cents when berries is plenty an' 3 or 4 cents ef they're sca'ce. Berry pickers hez easy hours, fer all berries picked today mus' be shipped today, so they don' put in mo'n six or eight hours in the fiel'. A good boss kin git a right smart o' work outen a batch o' kids in thet time, an' they meks good money too. O co'se they gits thar boa'd an' lodgin' an' ther quinine free."

"But all of them do not need quinine," was protested. "Who gives it and how much?"

"Well, hit don't tek 'em long ter need it in these bottoms. Ef they comes from the mountains o' co'se we waits till they begins ter git dopey; but hit's a safe bet thet a gang from the low country'll begin chillin' by the ninth or tenth day. We gits mo' work outen 'em ter give three or four grains every night all han's roun'."

"Surely everybody in the low country does not have malaria."

"Mebbe not ez long ez they stays thar, but let 'em mek



a change an' hit's sho ter crop out. Yer see hit'd never do ter bring a lot o' kids away from ther homes an' let 'em git sick on us. Hit's cheaper, an' hit saves a gran' pow-wow with the uplifters, see? Arter every rainy spell, the water backs up an' gits mighty bad. Hit's hardly fitten ter drink, an' a run o' malaria or typhoid fever is sho ter foller. Then, too, yer cain't keep chillen or grown folks nuther from eatin' late peaches an' watermelons which is allus full o' malaria. All these frills about mosquitoes causin' malaria, tek hit from me, is all bunk. Ask any ole planter what hez lived in these parts an' hed ter keep his han's well. He'll tell yer. So will Dr. Oleboy. He's practiced medicine fer forty years an' is health officer in my county. I reckon he knows."

Meantime the pony had quieted down and was resting first on one haunch, then the other. The children, stretching their bones, had spotted a "swimmin' hole" in the bend of the creek and were speculating on the number of cat, perch, and suckers its cool shadows harbored. Others, even without being told, washed their grimy faces and hands, and, thus emboldened, waded, squealing and splashing, into the enticing stream.

"How about it, Johnny, going to earn some money?" someone asked.

"Yeah, I reckon so, but I wish ter cracky us fellers could git a swim fust. Whar we come from, hit's all standin' water, with slime on top an' a black, oozy bottom. This yer water runs, an' yer kin se plumb through it. Look at the san' an' rocks." Dipping up a fist full of pebbles, he hurled them one by one over the smooth surface of the swimmin' hole, watching eagerly the wigglers, tadpoles, and "minnies" dart after the ever-widening ripples.

"How much money will you make?"

"Aw, I dunno. Daddy made the trade." Then, excitedly, "Gee whiz, did yer see thet fish jump? Ain't nobody in this bunch got a hook an' line?" looking over the crowd in an agony of despair.

"All han's aboa'd. We've got ter move." This from Mr. Donaghey brought to an untimely end the passing

dream of the children. Scrambling into the wagons, their bobbing heads watched with regret the last sparkle of the stream, then turned eager for the next experience. Accepting the proffered service of a stranger, the pony listened to a quiet word of assurance and encouragement, agreed that it is an exasperating, sometimes even a disappointing world, but that, on the whole, traveling in harness has its good points. Resentful of a beating, he whinnied gratefully over being led to the inevitable, and trotted out into the great world with his load of fellow-youngsters, each to learn his and her lesson that goin' a-berryin' sometimes means much more than goin' a-pleasurin'. It means life as it is lived out in the fields where "berries is berries."

"THOSE POOR EYE-TALIAN KIDS"<sup>3</sup>

Starched white ruffles edging the shelves, fresh white curtains at the windows; walls newly painted a gleaming sky blue; real sunshine streaming in the two windows—all this makes you forget the long flights of dusky stairs and the dirty halls below. Surely Mrs. Dupree must be a more intelligent soul than the careless housekeepers nearby who gather their whole families into the darkest and dirtiest room to ply their home work trades.

Stretched tight on a frame is a piece of lustrous silk which, sparkling with beads, will soon adorn some carefree young person who little dreams of the cramped fingers that have moved the crochet hook in and out to fasten each glittering speck. Hemmed in between this frame and the clumsy golden oak sideboard, Mrs. Dupree looks at me over her steel-rimmed spectacles, and begins to tell me, in English without an accent, of the evils of home work. "Why, it's awful, the way these Eyetalians work their whole families! They make all their kids work day and night—an' the work's too cheap; now if you could only organize the home workers—'Tain't right anyway, that people should work so hard. Bead'n's awful bad, for you.

<sup>3</sup> Willoughby, Marion M., in the *American Child*, 5: 8. Reprinted by permission of the National Child Labor Committee.



See, you sit here hours an' hours, humped over like this, until your chest's all caved in an' your stomach's in the wrong place. An' you get headaches an' have to wear glasses. 'Tain't right, I tell you."

Oh, I shan't have to worry about child labor here! Apparently Mrs. Dupree realizes how unwise it is. "Isn't that a pretty girl in that picture. Is she your daughter?"

"That's my oldest daughter Millie—ain't she nice? She's seventeen now an' she's as smart as she is pretty. She's going to learn to be a designer and her teacher says she's good."

"Oh, then she's still going to school?"

"No—not now—you see she has so much trouble with her stomach and back—she can't stand sitting still at a desk any more, straining her eyes all day. So she has a job—helping in a hospital—and maybe after a while she'll be well enough to go back to school. Her teacher says she'll make a fine designer."—And she drifts on to tell me of other things.

"No, I can't make so much money now. When Millie was in school she used to work with me after school and at night and we could make twelve dollars a week. She was a good worker, Millie was. But now just Magdalene and Annie help me, an' they can't work so fast. They're good girls though an' they help me every day after school—an' on Saturday they do a lot. Magdalene's only thirteen, but she goes way down town all alone to get the work. She's pretty smart, too, I guess.

"Yes," she called after me as I was leaving. "I certainly hope you can do something. Those Eye-talians oughtn't to be allowed to work their children the way they do—why, it's awful for those poor little kids."

#### BEET WORKERS <sup>4</sup>

Four Russian-German children, ranging in age from 9 to 13 years, came to the beet fields with their family the 1st of June. They worked at thinning and blocking for

<sup>4</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 115, pp. 22-23.

more than 3 weeks, 14½ hours a day, beginning at 4:30 A.M. They took 5 minutes in the morning and again in the afternoon for a lunch when, as they said, they “just got chunks in.” They took 20 minutes for dinner. About July 1 they went home, remaining until the middle of the month, when the hoeing began. They spent 5 weeks, 14½ hours a day, hoeing, and again went home, returning September 21 for the harvest, which lasted 4 weeks. During the harvest their working day lasted 10 hours only. On October 25 they returned to town for the winter, having spent a total of 12½ weeks at work. These four children and their father and mother cared for 51 acres. Ten acres was the generally accepted average for an adult, according to statements made to the Children’s Bureau by the sugar companies. The family owned a car and their town house was being repapered and repaired; two men were working on it at the time of the agent’s visit.

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**Child Labor Versus Children’s Work.**—These pen pictures from real life of the beet workers, berry pickers and industrial home workers illustrate three of the many types of situations in which children are being injured by their labor. Other pictures just as real could be drawn which would show children working at tasks and under conditions such that they not only were uninjured, but gained valuable training from the work. There is need to distinguish carefully between the two types of employment which Fuller has designated “child labor” and “children’s work.” Confusion on this point has caused much difficulty in the past and is producing much opposition at the present time to the proposed child labor amendment. Child labor is usually stated in terms of chronological age and “gainful employment.” These, however, are not adequate criteria. A more satisfactory statement may be made in terms of interference, case by case, with children’s opportunities for wholesome personal development.

We think of child labor as any work of children which interferes with health and normal development (mental as well as



physical health and development), which prevents or balks the legitimate expression of the child's natural instincts and desires, which deprives him of proper opportunity for play and for schooling, and of education not only through formal schooling and wholesome play, but through suitable work. . . .

Child labor is the work that interferes with a full living of the life of childhood and with the best possible preparation for adulthood. It is a matter not only of effects, but of hazards; and not only of effects and hazards, but of deprivations among which are the lack of suitable and sufficient schooling, the lack of suitable and sufficient play, and the lack of that kind and amount of work which is *children's work* as distinguished from *child labor*. Obviously, the condition of child labor depends to a large extent on the individual case—the particular boy or girl on the one hand, the particular work on the other. . . . There may be child labor without any wages at all, and wages without child labor.<sup>5</sup>

**Number and Distribution of Child Laborers.**—The census figures do not make the above distinction between child labor and children's work. They report those from 10 to 15 years of age who are "gainfully employed." Although it is likely that the majority of these are subjected to the hazards and deprivations that constitute child labor, it is equally likely that many are not being injured at all by their work. On the other hand, many who are not receiving wages, or who for other reasons are not included, are known to suffer loss of health, education, play and other elements of personal development. Furthermore, the census does not report the number of working children under 10 years of age, although it is known that they are employed in large numbers in agriculture, especially in the cotton and sugar beet fields, and in lesser numbers in many other occupations such as canneries, street trades, domestic service and industrial home work. In the United States in 1920 over one million (1,060,858) children between the ages of 10 and 15 years, inclusive, were reported as engaged in gainful occupations.<sup>6</sup> This was about one-twelfth of the children of that age group in the entire country. Al-

<sup>5</sup> Fuller, Raymond G., *Child Labor and the Constitution*, Preface, p. x, and pp. 2-3.

<sup>6</sup> Fourteenth Census of the United States, Population; 1920, *Occupations of Children*, p. 5.

though this is a striking reduction from the number (1,990,225) reported in 1910, a large part of the decrease is more apparent than real. It is partly due to the fact that the census of 1920 was taken at the beginning of a period of industrial depression and partly to the fact that the census date was changed from April 15 in 1910, to January 1 in 1920. Naturally smaller numbers of children were found in fields and canneries on January first than on April fifteenth.

OCCUPATIONS OF CHILDREN 10 TO 15 YEARS OF AGE,  
INCLUSIVE: 1920<sup>7</sup>

Occupation	Number	Per Cent Distribution
Total.....	1,060,858	100.0
<i>Agricultural pursuits, forestry and animal husbandry</i> .....	647,309	61.0
Farm labor (home farm).....	569,824	53.7
Farm labor (away from home).....	63,990	6.0
Other pursuits.....	13,495	1.3
<i>Non-agricultural pursuits</i> .....	413,549	39.0
<i>Non-agricultural pursuits</i> .....	413,549	100.0
Messenger, bundle and office boys and girls.....	48,028	11.6
Servants and waiters.....	41,586	10.1
Salesmen and saleswomen (stores).....	30,370	7.3
Clerks (except clerks in stores).....	22,521	5.4
Cotton-mill operatives.....	21,875	5.3
Newsboys.....	20,706	5.0
Iron and steel industry operatives.....	12,904	3.1
Clothing-industry operatives.....	11,757	2.8
Lumber and furniture industry operatives.....	10,585	2.6
Silk-mill operatives.....	10,023	2.4
Shoe-factory operatives.....	7,545	1.8
Woolen and worsted mill operatives....	7,077	1.7
Coal-mine operatives.....	5,850	1.4
All other occupations.....	162,722	39.3

In the non-agricultural occupations there seems to be a real decrease in child labor between 1910 and 1920 due

<sup>7</sup> Adapted from U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 93, p. 14, and No. 114, p. 6.



to the increase in state regulation and the effect of the Federal child labor tax law. There has probably been an increase since 1920 because of the improvement in industrial conditions and the decision that the Federal tax was unconstitutional.

The situation varies greatly in different parts of the country, but no state is free from child labor. When all occupations are taken into account the proportion is much larger in the South than in any other section. When non-agricultural occupations alone are considered the proportion is larger in the New England, Middle Atlantic and East North Central States than for any one of the three southern divisions. The states with the highest rates are Mississippi, South Carolina and Alabama, in which approximately one-fourth of all children 10 to 15 years of age are at work.<sup>8</sup>

**Why Children Work.**—Three closely related factors are in the main responsible for child labor.<sup>9</sup> These are (a) economic unadjustment (poverty), (b) educational unadjustment (failure of the schools) and (c) moral unadjustment (mores and folkways out of harmony with modern industrial conditions).

(a) Investigations in various localities have shown that economic pressure is a factor in the situation of one-fourth to one-third of the children who enter industry before completion of the elementary school course. This was the case with two-fifths of 895 children studied in Boston,<sup>10</sup> over one-third of 170 children studied in Waltham, Massachusetts,<sup>11</sup> and 30 per cent of 620 children studied in seven industrial centers.<sup>12</sup> In considering these data two facts need to be borne in mind. First, poverty is often the reason stated when the principal incentive to go to work is dissatisfaction with school. Second, poverty itself, as was pointed out in Chapter XII, is not to be regarded as an

<sup>8</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 114, p. 9.

<sup>9</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 93, pp. 19-23.

<sup>10</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 89, p. 99.

<sup>11</sup> Abels, Margaret Hutton, *From School to Work*, p. 23.

<sup>12</sup> Sixty-first Congress, Senate Document, No. 645, *Summary of Report of Condition of Woman and Child Wage Earners in the United States*, pp. 263-264.

absolute economic level, but as an adverse relation between wants and the capacity to pay for their satisfaction. From this standpoint child labor may be regarded as an attempt to overcome this discrepancy either for the child himself or for his family.

Some boys and girls go to work in order to help raise the family's plane of living, although their labor is not necessary for bare subsistence. Frequently there is a real need for the employment of rural children on the home farm, especially where the crops require much hand labor, since help is costly and the farmers often do not have much ready money. However this factor can easily be and often is over-emphasized. There is a widespread notion that street workers, especially newsboys, are usually bread-winners supporting widowed mothers. Fuller<sup>13</sup> shows on the basis of numerous studies that this is not ordinarily true. Most of them live with both parents in "normal" homes. "Of the majority of street workers it may be said that their earnings are very meager and that their contribution to family support is negligible." Much of their money is spent on movies, crap games, candy and ice cream.

(b) The same studies that show economic factors to play an important rôle in the causation of child labor also lay stress upon educational factors. They make it plain that dissatisfaction with school is in many cases the principal reason for leaving to go to work; in many other instances it is a contributory cause. This educational unadjustment was considered to be an important factor in the employment of one-half of the children in seven industrial centers, one-fifth of those in Boston and 30 per cent of those in Waltham.<sup>14</sup> Some were discouraged by failure to secure promotion, some were forced to undertake tasks for which they were physically or mentally unqualified, some were restless little bodies impatient with school-room routine and discipline. Uniformity of program, large classes, mis-

<sup>13</sup> Fuller, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-86.

<sup>14</sup> The studies referred to here are the same as those mentioned in the preceding paragraph.



understanding on the part of teachers, and lack of encouragement at home, all entered into the unadjustment of these boys and girls, who sought in employment the outlet for their energies and the satisfaction of their wishes which were denied them in the class-room.

(c) In an earlier period of American history children received most of their education, both general and vocational, in the home. Working with their fathers and mothers they acquired the information and the skill which enabled them to become farmers, artisans, tradesmen, housewives, etc. No doubt the child's development was often subordinated to the exigencies of harvest time, wash day, and other busy periods, but at least he was not exploited by a stranger who had no personal interest in him.

Now when the factory system began to develop this situation was gradually changed. The new industrial employers were looking for cheap help. Many of their processes were simple enough to be mastered by rather small children. Hence they bid for child laborers. These were provided by overseers of the poor and by parents who found greater immediate advantage in the children's meager wages than in the work they might perform about the home. There was no thought of harming the children. There was little question about the propriety and the wisdom of this procedure. Children had always worked, why shouldn't they continue to work? It was not realized that removal from the home to the factory exposed them to impersonal exploitation. Apparently it did not occur to many people that the monotonous routine of machine-tending lacked the educational value of diversified labor on the home farm.

In other words, the economic organization underwent tremendous changes while the folkways and the mores were altered very slowly. This "lag," as Ogburn would call it,<sup>15</sup> is therefore an important element in the explanation of child labor. This moral unadjustment, or lagging behind of understanding, of social attitudes and of group action, manifests itself in the arguments over the pro-

<sup>15</sup> Ogburn, W. F., *Social Change*, Part IV.

posed federal child labor amendment. The charges of "bolshevism," "socialism" and "paternalism" which are hurled against the proposed amendment and its advocates are the fulminations of emotionally over-wrought people, seeking to stem the tide of social and economic change. On the other hand, the violent protagonists of the amendment seem entirely to forget that folkways change very slowly. Their enthusiasm, too, is an emotional outpouring which tends to submerge their calmer judgments. Other symptoms of this moral unadjustment are the attitudes of some immigrant parents, of certain rural Americans and of many chambers of commerce.

**Conditions Under Which Children Work.**—The statement of child labor in terms of interference with wholesome personal development implies that the conditions under which children work are of supreme importance. Of especial significance here are the kinds of work done, the physical surroundings, the hours, the wages received, and the regularity of employment. Studies have been made of these conditions in many of the occupations in which children are engaged. Agriculture, in which, according to census figures, over three-fifths of all working children are found, usually is not thought to involve a problem of child labor at all. An idealized tradition as to rural childhood is still widely held. So far as we are aware, this is not borne out by the results of any study yet made. On the contrary, "farm labor may be most cruel—the remoteness, the monotony, the heat, the tasks often past the strength of adolescence, the food, the sleeping quarters. Hours are often from sunrise to sunset with milking the cows, feeding the stock, long hours in the fields, and then to bed after evening chores have been done."<sup>16</sup>

An investigation was recently made of the work of children on the farms of North Dakota which would seem to be fairly typical of conditions, at least, in the Middle West.<sup>17</sup> The 845 children between the ages of six and

<sup>16</sup> Benjamin, Paul L., *The "Home Boy" in Delaware*, Survey, 46: 81-82.

<sup>17</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 129.



seventeen who reported that they had done farm work during the year preceding the study, had performed practically all of the tasks involved in farming. Most of these were relatively simple—hauling of all kinds, hoeing, raking hay, shocking grain and picking up potatoes. However, nearly one-half of the children, both boys and girls, ranging in age from seven to seventeen, had done plowing. Large numbers of others had disked, harrowed, cultivated corn, mowed hay, drilled grain, driven grain binders, pitched bundles to threshing machines, stacked and pitched hay, etc. Many of these processes are too heavy for children. That many are also dangerous is attested by the large number of accidents resulting in some injury—104 out of 845.

Children 6 years of age reported that they had driven "header boxes," picked and husked corn. Children 7 years old stated that they had plowed, harrowed, hauled, shocked grain, raked hay and performed many simpler tasks. Children of 8 had done all these and also had disked, cultivated, driven grain binders, loaded "header boxes," hauled and pitched bundles to threshing machines, mowed and pitched hay. Children 9 years of age had worked at all kinds of farming operations except corn planting, driving corn binders or headers and stacking grain.

No information was obtained as to the daily hours, but the seasonal duration of field work was obtained in 590 cases. Thirty-five per cent had worked less than a month, 22 per cent four months or more, 8 per cent six months or more. Infringement on the minimum school period was obvious.

Most of the work done by the children included in this study was on the home farm. However, one-fifth of them had worked away from home during the year, either for wages or for board. Wages for general farm work ranged from \$6 to \$50 per month and maintenance. Harvest workers received from \$1 to \$5 per day and in a few cases more.

The North Dakota study dealt with the traditional American farm situation in which an owner or tenant does

much of his own work, employing little help and having close personal relations with his "hands." But there are other, more specialized types of farming which have been "industrialized." That is, large tracts of land are owned by individuals or corporations and operated by hired laborers. The growing of sugar beets frequently occurs under such conditions as these.<sup>18</sup>

The large amount of hand work to be done makes possible the employment of many women and children. Their first operations are blocking and thinning. The former, which consists of chopping out sections of seedlings with a hoe, is usually done by adults. This is followed immediately by thinning, that is, pulling out all but one beet plant in each section, a task usually performed by children. Straddling the beet row, they kneel and, bending over, crawl from plant to plant on hands and knees. They usually work at high speed and for long hours, for thinning must be completed before the plants grow too large. It is a very tiring process; the wrists often become swollen and lame; the glare of the sun is a severe strain on the eyes. As soon as blocking and thinning are completed, hoeing begins. This must be repeated two or three times but is usually done in a more leisurely way. Hoeing is ordinarily done by the older children and adults although many young children are also put at this work. In harvesting after the beets have been loosened from the soil by a horse-drawn machine, they are pulled up by the hand worker and thrown in piles or rows to be topped. Pulling is usually done by the smaller children; it is hard work as each beet with its top averages over two pounds in weight. In topping the worker picks up the beet and cuts off the crown of leaves with a sharp downward stroke, using a heavy knife about eighteen inches long, with a hook at the end. This work is often done by children who, because of the weight, rest the beet on one knee while they cut off the leaves. Cuts on the legs and hands are rather common, with sometimes the loss of a finger. Pulling and topping frequently extend over into cold weather. The workers become soaked from

<sup>18</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 115.



the waist down, the clothing often freezes stiff, they "get muddy to the skin"; hands become chapped and cracked from the cold and fingers are often sore and bleeding. Rheumatism is common.

One of the most harmful features of the beet work lies in the long hours. In the Colorado study during the blocking and thinning process, the net working day, exclusive of meals and rest periods, was 9 hours for 85 per cent of the children, both boys and girls, a number of whom were only 6 or 7 years of age. One-third of the children reported 11 hours and one-eighth 12 to 15 hours as constituting a regular working day. The hours are slightly shorter in pulling and topping than in blocking and thinning, about three-fourths of the children reporting nine or more hours in the field. During the hoeing process about 70 per cent worked nine hours or longer.

Almost one-fourth of the children for whom absence was reported had been out of school more than four weeks during the preceding school year in order to help with the beets. Irregular attendance gave rise to a large amount of retardation in school work, approximately three-fifths of the resident children between 8 and 16 years of age being two years below the "normal" grade for their age.

The earnings of individual children in beet fields are difficult to compute since most of the work is done by families working together. One estimate places it as high as \$200 per season, if the child works in all the processes.

Housing and sanitary conditions are frequently wretched. Small, one or two room shacks, built of tar paper, corrugated iron or rough boards with leaking roofs, broken windows and in a general state of dilapidation are the rule. They are described as "nothing but a dog house," "not fit for chickens to live in," etc. Overcrowding prevails; almost half of those in the Colorado study lived with three or more persons per room.

One of the most widely distributed forms of child labor is that of the street traders. Newsboys, errand, messenger and delivery boys, bootblacks, market stand helpers and others are so commonplace that their presence is taken for

granted. Yet some of the most hazardous forms of labor are represented in these tasks. Working long hours, exposed to all kinds of weather, subsisting often on irregular and unwholesome meals secured at some quick lunch place, living constantly in the rush and excitement of the street—all these tend to undermine physical health and personal stability.<sup>19</sup> It is rather common for newsboys to get up at three or four o'clock in the morning, deliver or sell papers until school time, then continue after school hours until late in the evening. Fourteen or more hours of work per day easily results.

Newsboys frequently carry loads beyond their strength. "Harry," twelve years old, covers a route twelve miles long. His load is usually 15 pounds when he starts out but larger editions once a week make it 30 pounds. Although he weighs only 60 pounds himself, he carries this load on his shoulder before breakfast, goes to school, and then delivers an afternoon edition. James, eleven years old, and weighing 66 pounds, carries 12 to 20 pounds of papers on his shoulders when he starts out at 3 A.M. over a five mile route. Samuel, who is fourteen years of age and weighs 100 pounds, once a week carries 75 pounds of papers for a half mile before he starts to deliver them. On the other five days of the week the load is about half as much.<sup>20</sup>

The earnings are small. In Cincinnati the average earnings of a newsboy are twenty cents a day, in Connecticut cities fifty-four cents a day.<sup>21</sup>

Other prominent types of child labor are in coal breakers, canneries, cotton mills, industrial home work, the stage and public amusements. Factory employment of children has been greatly reduced in recent years as a result of increasingly strict legislation. The most outstanding instances that remain are in the southern cotton mills, concerning which no adequate data are at hand.

**Child Labor and Health.**—Different kinds of work affect the personal development of children in different ways. Some enrich life, while others impoverish it. Of the latter

<sup>19</sup> Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 80-81.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.



some do their damage through the impairment of health, some through restricted opportunities for schooling or for play, some through blind-alley occupations, some through incitement to delinquency.

Certain occupations and industries present special dangers to the growing bodies of boys and girls. Some of these, which have been recognized in the legislation of various states are: work in mines and quarries, the glass industry, canning, home work of various sorts, and occupations involving exposure to the weather, exposure to dangerous substances, dangerous positions or night work. The hazards which these occupations offer, even to adults, are greatly increased in the case of juvenile workers because of the physiological changes taking place in their bodies and, perhaps, because of their carelessness about matters of health.

Children are more subject to accidents than adult workers. Playfulness, ignorance of consequences and general irresponsibility tend to make them more careless with machinery. Imperfect coordination of muscles may also increase the number of mishaps. The proportion of working children who are injured is two or three times as great as the proportion of adults. A study was made in a textile mill in Connecticut of 1,164 accidents, in 1920, to workers whose ages were known. Over one-fourth had been suffered by employees under 20 years of age, although this age group included only 15 per cent of the total number employed. The number of accidents per 100 employees was 37 for those under 15 years of age, 43 for those between 15 and 20 years, and less than 22 for all others. In Boston one child in every twenty of those enrolled in the continuation schools had been injured as a direct result of his employment.

The physical consequences of child labor may be summarized in terms of overstrain, accidents, industrial poisoning, under-development, lack of vigor, high morbidity and mortality rates. But mental health also is imperiled by child labor, as is clearly indicated by Fuller in the following statement.

Much is involved in child labor, whether in city or in country, that is unfavorable to mental health. . . . The physical effects have been uppermost in the public mind, possibly because they are more obvious and more easily understandable; moreover, the physician and the physiologist have had more to say about child labor than the psychologist and the psychiatrist. Nevertheless, the psychical effects are quite as numerous, and quite as much a menace to future happiness and efficiency, as the physical. Deformation of the physical is not more terrible than deformation of the personality, and health of body not more to be esteemed than health of mind. The child has a mind, a nervous system, as well as a body, and it has to be remembered, too, that he is mentally as well as physically immature, and susceptible, and plastic. The abolition of child labor and the establishment of its substitutes, particularly suitable schooling, suitable play, and suitable work, is a task of mental hygiene.

The nervous disorders and derangements in which child labor may be a contributing factor are of great variety. They range all the way from slight abnormalities to functional diseases in which the power of sight, or the use of arms or legs has been lost. Of especial significance from our present standpoint are the so-called "neuroses of development," commonly described under such heads as chorea, dementia praecox of youth; but the roots of most functional disorders of adulthood, as of childhood and youth, are found in the early years. Most child laborers are in that particular period—early adolescence—when neurotic disturbances are peculiarly liable to appear and become seated. . . .

Conditions which involve fatigue and particularly the cumulation of fatigue, which lower the general physical tone, which separate the child from his own natural society, which destroy self-confidence and initiative, which starve the instinct of workmanship instead of feeding it, which present an experience of repeated failure, and which are marked by such concomitants as worry and fear, which fail to develop a rich fund of wholesome, objective interests, are conditions found in child labor and in the etiology of nervous diseases and personality disturbances of various sorts.<sup>22</sup>

**Child Labor and Education.**—By definition, one of the distinguishing characteristics of child labor is frequently deprivation of schooling and other educational advantages. Sometimes this takes the extreme form of illiteracy. It would be futile to argue as to which is cause and which effect. It is sufficient to say that each is an integral part of

<sup>22</sup> Fuller, Raymond G., *Child Labor and Mental Hygiene*, Survey, 45: 891-892.



a situation in which the personal development of children is checked: labor, ignorance, poverty, etc.

Those sections of the country in which the most child labor is found have also the greatest amount of illiteracy. "Five states having one-eighth of the total child population ten to fifteen years of age furnish one-third of all child laborers in the United States (on the census basis) and one-half of all child illiterates."<sup>23</sup> Of 20,000 children between the ages of fourteen and sixteen who went to work in 1917 and 1918 in five states, the laws of which fix no educational minima, more than one-half had not completed the fourth grade, and more than one-fourth were unable to sign their names legibly.<sup>24</sup>

In the study of children in the Colorado and Michigan beet fields, nearly three-fifths were found to be retarded two years in school. Similar retardation has been found in studies of street workers.<sup>25</sup> Child labor is, of course, not the only factor in this retardation, but the two conditions do seem to have a very intimate relationship.

However, illiteracy and retardation do not by any means measure the whole educational loss. Much of a child's development is gained through personal contacts and play activities, both of which are often limited by employment. This is well illustrated by the story of the berry pickers at the beginning of this chapter. The natural interest of the youngsters in the swimming hole, fishing, etc., suggests the spontaneous and informal way in which much real education takes place. The thwarting of these interests by the foreman shows how child labor interferes with this sort of development.

**"Blind Alley" Trades and Industrial Instability.**—Not only are child laborers limited in general education; they also lack in most cases the special training which would qualify them for work at a skilled trade. Hence they enter what usually constitute "blind alley" jobs, with little opportunity for vocational advancement. It has been esti-

<sup>23</sup> Fuller, *op. cit.*, p. 130.

<sup>24</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 78, pp. 43, 46.

<sup>25</sup> Fuller, *op. cit.*, pp. 81-82.

mated that about 90 per cent of the working children go into unskilled occupations, about 7 per cent into semi-skilled and perhaps 3 per cent into really skilled trades which promise a future.<sup>26</sup> The consequence is not merely that their earning capacity is low, but that their habits of work are disorganized. Having little to lose in any situation, they flit from job to job, frequently discouraged, sometimes thoroughly demoralized.

What John had really wanted to be—at least when he was fourteen—was a priest. But his family needed his earnings, so he renounced that desire, willing to accept as a substitute any “interesting work.” He had no second preference, but decided to try a job with a small printing concern that had an opening in which they promised unusual opportunities and a good “future” in the trade itself or in the office of the concern—they renewed their promises. A year passed, and then two, with “opportunity” always seeming to lie just ahead. By the end of the third year, John was discouraged, his ambition and his zest for work were gone. We couldn’t convince him that other jobs might prove different, or persuade him to go to night school for further education to equip himself for other work. His only answer was “It’s too late, my apprenticeship years are gone.”<sup>27</sup>

Anna was eager to design dresses, and she seemed to be equipped with an unusual knack for that sort of thing. A large and very reliable concern promised to give her an opportunity in their dressmaking department “just as soon as there was an opening.” Pending that, she took ordinary clerical work in their mail-order department so that she would be an employe of the concern, having merely to be “transferred” when the opening came. The same story of promise after promise which kept her at the office job in the constant hope of the desired opportunity. Again the years of apprenticeship passed—until Anna abandoned hope of learning her chosen trade, gave up her office job and set out to find some other office position, where there might be a chance to secure some advancement.<sup>28</sup>

For the average child of from fourteen to sixteen, school life is over and industrial life has begun. Whatever his reason for leaving school, whether poverty or apathy toward the school itself, he has little idea what particular trade he wishes to follow. He does not know which occupations want boys nor which will afford him a future. He takes the first job that he finds, an

<sup>26</sup> Mangold, Geo. B., *Problems of Child Welfare*, p. 295.

<sup>27</sup> Kawin, Ethel, in *Survey*, 53: 150.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*



unskilled job; works for some time, perhaps a few weeks or a few months; finds that there is no opportunity to learn the trade, that the pay involved does not loom as large as it did at first; he is tired by the monotony of the task, and quits. He runs about the streets and casually looks for another position. After a while he finds it. It is another unskilled job. He works a short time at this task, then leaves it as he did the first, and so he drifts from job to job, from industry to industry, still unskilled, and exposed to all the social and industrial evils which threaten adolescence. Once grown, he is crowded out of his job forever by another younger crop of workers, and finds himself one of the class of the permanently unskilled, with the attendant low wages and unemployment of his class. He had nothing to sell but his youth; he sold it, and received nothing in return.<sup>29</sup>

**Child Labor and Delinquency.**—Some of the data at hand indicate that working children find themselves in conflict with the law more frequently than those who are not employed. For example, a study was made several years ago of delinquency among children at work and children in school respectively.<sup>30</sup> It showed that in six large cities the proportion of delinquents among working boys was from two to ten times as great as the proportion among school boys. Among working girls the proportion of delinquents was from three to twenty-five times as great as among school girls. This discrepancy is much more marked in some offenses than in others. Thus school boys were found to have committed almost as many burglaries as had working boys. But the employed group was responsible for a much larger number and proportion of forgeries, assaults, larcenies and cases of vagrancy and disorderly conduct. There was also a great deal more recidivism among working boys and girls than among those delinquents who were or had been attending school.

The precise significance of these figures is not clear. But we may well suspect that factors in the excessive delinquency of employed children were disorganized home life and lack of parental guidance, as well as demoralizing influences immediately connected with their work.

<sup>29</sup> Douglas, Paul H., *American Apprenticeship and Industrial Education*, p. 85.

<sup>30</sup> *Report on Condition of Woman and Child Wage Earners in the United States*, 8: 37.

The point to this whole discussion of the consequences of child labor is that there are types of work in which boys and girls engage which stunt their physical and mental growth, warp their personalities and otherwise handicap them in the game of life. But at the same time we must not forget that there are types of children's work which cause no injury and even contribute to personal development.

**Control of Child Labor.**—From our analysis of the causal factors involved in child labor it is evident that its control must include more or less direct regulation of the employment of children, regulation of school attendance, modification of the school system so as to render formal education more attractive and more profitable to all sorts of children, vocational guidance and training and the lessening of economic pressure. All of these, in turn, rest upon changes in the folkways and mores brought about through public opinion.

All the states have attempted through repressive legislation to regulate the labor of boys and girls. The statutes include in their scope an age minimum for children entering employment with special provisions for certain types of occupations, educational and physical requirements, maximum daily and weekly hours, and prohibition of night work. Satisfactory classification of the laws of the various states is difficult because of their wide diversity and the numerous exemptions.<sup>31</sup> The usual age minimum for work in factories, stores, and often in other occupations is 14 years. In only two states is it lower than this and in seven it is higher. Work in mines and quarries is usually prohibited below the age of 16 years although 10 states permit such work at 14 and 15 years of age and six states and the District of Columbia have no minimum age provisions for either mines or quarries. Most states have laws prohibiting children under specified ages from working in at least a certain number of dangerous or injurious occupations.

A maximum working day of eight hours with not over

<sup>31</sup> This summary of state child labor laws is based on U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. Nos. 93 and 114.



48 hours per week has been established in the majority of the states for children under 16 in factories and stores. Nine hours or over per day and 51 to 60 hours per week is still permitted in 11 states. Night work of children under 16 in factories and stores is prohibited in nearly all states. The educational requirements include compulsory attendance at all-day school in all states up to ages varying from fourteen to eighteen years. Practically all laws have exemptions, however, many of which seriously limit the effects of the compulsory provision. Continuation school attendance is required for employed children in 26 states. Educational requirements for regular employment certificates vary from the completion of the eighth grade to mere proficiency in certain subjects such as English and arithmetic. Ten states have no educational requirement for the certificate. Examination by a physician before the child goes to work is mandatory in 22 states, optional with the issuing officer in 7 states and the District of Columbia, and not required in 19 states.

Agriculture and domestic service are nearly always exempted from the provisions of child labor laws, a fact that opens the way to a large amount of exploitation. Exemptions are frequently made also in occupations which deal with perishable products, notably the canning and preserving industries. The only regulation of these types of child labor is that which results from the operation of the compulsory school attendance laws. Until recently most of the street trades also escaped regulation but this is gradually being corrected by special legislation.

The method that has been found in practice to be most effective in the administration of the child labor laws is the employment certificate system. This system, in one form or another, is used in 46 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>32</sup> In the majority of states the issuance of certificates is placed in the hands of local officials. These

<sup>32</sup> Discussion of the administration of child labor laws is based in large part on Woodbury, Helen Sumner, *Administration of Child Labor Laws*, Part V, U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 133.

may be labor inspectors, judges, physicians, or private individuals appointed by a state department, but in most cases they are unsupervised local public-school officials. A few states, however, have laid this responsibility upon the state board of education or the state labor department or industrial commission, which usually has the duty of inspecting establishments for violations of child labor laws. A decided advantage has been found in having as small a number of officials as possible entrusted with the power of issuing certificates. Upon the skill and care with which this function is exercised depends to a considerable extent the success or failure of the enforcement of the child labor standards that may have been adopted in a given state. It demands high character and intelligence in the issuing officer, as well as time and opportunity to make himself familiar with the administrative details of the work.

The chief requirements for obtaining certificates are the presentation of evidence of age and of the attainment of certain physical and educational standards; the appearance before the issuing officer of the child himself, or of one of his parents or someone standing in parental relation to him, or of both; and the presentation of a written, *bona fide* promise of employment signed by the prospective employer, or by someone acting for him. Where the law provides that the child must prove that his earnings are needed for his own support or that of his family, poverty becomes a further requirement.

Because of the wide variations in laws of the different states and because of the gross inadequacy of some there have been two attempts at federal regulation of child labor. One, in 1916, prohibited the shipment in interstate or foreign commerce of goods produced in establishments employing children in violation of certain age and hour standards. Another, in 1919, provided for the levying of a 10 per cent tax on the income of such establishments. Both were declared unconstitutional.

Two Supreme Court decisions having indicated that Congress does not have the power to regulate child labor, a constitutional amendment granting such power was passed by



Congress in 1924 and submitted to the states for ratification. This amendment states:

Section 1. The Congress shall have power to limit, regulate, and prohibit the labor of persons under 18 years of age.

Section 2. The power of the several states is unimpaired by this article except that the operation of state laws shall be suspended to the extent necessary to give effect to legislation enacted by the Congress.

The proposal of this amendment has generated one of the most violent discussions of our generation. Why this should be so is not entirely plain, but it appears that some opponents of the measure are giving vent to their repressed feelings concerning the prohibition laws, while others are camouflaging personal financial interests by charges of "bolshevism." Some of the advocates of the amendment, on the other hand, have become so wrought up over the matter that they have lost all sense of proportion. An examination of the arguments presented by both sides leads us to this conclusion: that the advocates of the measure have a considerable body of supporting evidence; that the opposition has a very weak case; and that there is no reason to believe that the country will be ruined whether the amendment is adopted or not.

In their enthusiasm for new legislation social reformers frequently forget that no laws, however well enforced, can solve all the problems involved in the employment of children. We have agreed that the line between child labor (occupation damaging to personality) and children's work (occupation which develops personality) varies with a number of factors—attitude of employer, physical conditions of employment, the child's own physical and mental development and the future that lies open to him. Because this line is such a variable, it can be only approximately defined by law, and a great deal must be left to the discretion of parents, teachers, employers and public officials. This is in no sense an argument against child labor legislation; it is simply an effort to point out the greater importance of social attitudes.

**Child Labor Versus Child Welfare.**—Restrictive child labor legislation is therefore only one step in the larger task of promoting the wholesome development of boys and girls. It is far from adequate merely to insist that a child below a given age shall not engage in certain occupations. Compulsory school attendance is another step. But mere attendance is no guarantee of any benefit. Moreover, the usual literary education alone is obviously inadequate, since a large majority of persons early become wage-earners. We have referred to the hit-or-miss manner in which most children choose their work, the "blind alley" trades so often entered, and the large amount of industrial instability. These call for a modification of our educational program in the direction of fitting each child for the life conditions he must meet. There seems to be a need for vocational education in the fields of industry, commerce, agriculture, home economics and other occupations.<sup>33</sup> The child needs also the skilled vocational counsel and guidance. This has been described as "a continuous process designed to help the individual to choose, to plan his preparation for, to enter upon, and to make progress in an occupation."<sup>34</sup>

Thus child labor is simply one phase of the problems of child welfare. This means that the control of child labor is incidental to the greater task of developing children's personalities through helping them to find and play acceptable rôles in the social order. It is not our purpose here to describe this larger task. We wish simply to utter the warning that the solutions of problems such as these of child labor are not easily reached. There is, first of all, the question of the efficacy of existing social machinery. Then it is necessary to consider what new arrangements, if any, may be needed. Finally, there is the infinitely more difficult problem of directing public attention and altering

<sup>33</sup> Attention is called to the fact that a step in this direction was taken by the passing of the Smith-Hughes Act by Congress in 1917. This is a plan for Federal financial cooperation with the states in promoting vocational education. All states have accepted the provisions of this act.

<sup>34</sup> U. S. Bur. Educ., 1918, Bul. 19, quoted by Mangold, *Problems of Child Welfare*, p. 297.



social attitudes. We sometimes think we know the answers to the first and second, but we have to confess our ignorance of the third.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. From your personal experiences describe situations which illustrate child labor and children's work as defined above.
2. Secure the life histories of working children, e.g., newsboy, delivery boy, farm laborer, nurse maid, factory worker.
3. Describe children's work in your home district which does not come within the scope of Fuller's definition of child labor.
4. Write abstracts of the laws of your state which pertain to child labor, school attendance and vocational guidance.
5. Interview officials responsible for administration of these laws and report on:
  - a. Methods of securing certificates, including: evidence of age, physical examination, school report, promise of employment, etc.
  - b. Chart this procedure (see sample chart in U. S. Chil. Bur. Pub. No. 41).
  - c. Draw organization chart of the administrative agencies.
  - d. Factory inspection and other law enforcement work.
6. Visit a part-time school for working children and report on:
  - a. Equipment
  - b. Curriculum—how different from ordinary course of study?
  - c. Teaching staff—training, experience
  - d. Coordination of school and job

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## CHAPTER XVII

### FATIGUE AND HOURS OF LABOR

SEVEN P.M.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Nyack stood beside the stove on a hot May evening poking the pork chops doubtfully with a fork and holding on to her cheek. It was the end of a particularly wearing week. The kitchen was hot, the other three rooms were hot, and everyone was late. Mrs. Nyack had been waiting for the whole family for over an hour, alternately heating up the chops as she thought that she heard her husband's step upon the stairs, then turning out the gas again, and applying the oil of cloves to her tooth. The later Mr. Nyack and Joe arrived, the more likely were they to demand their dinner the instant they opened the door. Both men did hard manual labor and were furiously hungry when they came home. They could hardly be blamed for wanting their dinner and wanting it at once. On the other hand, if their arrival varied by an hour, how could they expect their meals to be ready on the dot? Both the appetite of the men, and the inability of Mrs. Nyack to appease it instantly at an uncertain hour, were reasonable. But the Nyacks were seldom reasonable at six P.M. and never at seven.

The first to arrive was May. She worked at a box factory, and had her Saturday afternoons off. This year for the first time she had spent her Saturdays as she saw fit.

<sup>1</sup> This story of the Nyack family was written by Mrs. Eleanor Rowland Wembridge, psychologist of the Women's Protective Association, Cleveland, Ohio. It appeared in the *Survey Graphic* for October 1, 1924, and is reprinted by permission of Mrs. Wembridge, the Women's Protective Association and the *Survey*.



Until she was sixteen she had given up her holiday to the weekly cleaning of the four rooms of the Nyack apartment. This spring she had announced that since she gave \$7 of her weekly \$13 toward the family budget, she would not give her Saturday afternoons. "You take that or nothing," was her ultimatum, "and if you crab, I'll leave like Louisa." This was a serious threat. Louisa was the eldest child and she had worked for three years in a printer's office. Her mother had always insisted on taking her entire pay envelope, although Louisa had protested bitterly, but in vain. So she bided her time. On her eighteenth birthday had occurred the great emancipation proclamation in the Nyack family. Louisa had removed herself and her belongings to a rooming house, and it developed that in this strange country no law could force her to come home again. An occasional bill she gave her mother for old times' sake, and she often paid visits at mealtimes—meals for which she scrupulously paid. But to come back and live with her family, she refused. Since May still lived at home she knew that she owed her family something, but she did not propose to have her mother issue back to her at her own discretion the money which she had herself earned. Nor would she allow her mother to spend it for her. The Nyack tradition for generations had been that children, before their marriage, owed all their earnings to their parents. The generation now coming on disagreed with this precedent, and insisted upon doing as they chose. So although the children and their parents loved each other, relations were somewhat strained.

Now, as it turned out, May had had her Saturday afternoon, but it had not been successful. Bud Wyckle, who for three successive Saturdays had waited for her on the drug store corner, in order to accompany her to Dreamland Park, had not kept his tryst today. May had gone to the park with a crowd of girls, and on the dance floor, there was Bud, dancing with the girl who took the tickets at the movie theater. This was a severe blow. To see her "steady" dancing with an over-dressed blonde in red shoes took the sunshine out of life. In fact it robbed life itself

of any reason for being. All that May could do, she had done.

She left the park in a rage, and spent five dollars for some green King Tut sandals, with green silk stockings to match. She would show Bud whether she or the theatrical blonde was the "classier" dresser. But when May entered the kitchen where Mrs. Nyack's flushed face shone over the frying pan, she braced herself for the storm. Useless to explain to her mother why green sandals were necessary.

"You take them things off," ordered her mother, the moment her impatient eyes fell on May's feet. "You spending money on fancy truck, and me with my teeth, and all," she shouted. "You take them off, I say."

"If I take them off, I take myself off," May shouted back.

"You crook!" screamed her mother in exasperation.

"Shut your face," answered May, in the same key.

The argument continued at this pitch until the door opened and Louisa stepped in.

"Any eats tonight?" she inquired, laying a dollar bill ostentatiously upon the table.

She listened to the last reverberations of May's "shut-ups."

"Still quarreling, I see," she observed with a shrug, and then, "You can stop your mouths, right now, or me and my dollar takes a walk," she added, and her hand started toward the bill. Her mother's hand, however, reached it first.

"Well, look at them green legs," cried Mrs. Nyack, "and ask why I'm jawing, and me with my face aching all the week."

She was almost in tears, but she knew already that her case was lost. She saw May glance at Louisa and heard her sneer, "Better take your dollar and ramble, old thing; same old hole."

Their mother knew that if she said another word Louisa, and probably May, would both be off. Her hand tightened on the dollar. She needed it toward the new teeth, and besides that, Louisa was her daughter and she wanted to



see her. So she gulped down her sobs and the wrath which the wanton green slippers aroused in her, and turned on the gas again.

By this time Mr. Nyack was on the threshold with his dinner pail. He had wielded a pick in the hot sun for nine hours, the perspiration had made paths through the dirt on his face, hunger clawed at his vitals like a gnawing fox—and here were his three women having words with each other, and the meat not on the table.

“Dry up, you damned women,” he roared. And because of some remnants of fatherly authority, or because they thought his advice was sound, they did stop their clamor, and drew up their chairs.

“You sit down, Ma,” said May, ready to make amends, “I’ll dish it up,” and she placed the plates of chops and potatoes, again reheated over the gas, before the family.

“Leave some for Joe,” sighed her mother, “and give me my coffee. I can’t chew.”

She was glad to sit down, even though the meals were only an aggravation to her at this stage of her dentistry.

Mrs. Nyack had put off getting her false teeth as long as she could, both on account of the expense, and because she had refused to consider her teeth all her life, and she hated to begin. When her first child had come home from school, with a small card on which was printed—“I promise to brush my teeth every day,” and had pinned it over the sink, she was mystified. And when the young enthusiastic proceeded to fly at the inside of her mouth with a small brush, the mother was horrified. She tolerated any such ceremony in her kitchen only because she was more in awe of the public school teacher than she was of the Pope. In every previous encounter with the school system she had been worsted, and she knew that she would be in this. So she kept silence, but she was utterly unconvinced. As her successive children came home with ridiculous little brushes, she accepted the mania only as one more feature of an unaccountable country.

“They’ll be taking a broom to their stummicks next,” she confided to her husband who was as much bewildered

by the performance as she. Although the parents could not stop their children, both of them resolutely declined to join in the obscene rite themselves. Now at forty, Mrs. Nyack was parting with her last teeth after weeks of torture. Everyone lost teeth at forty, as a matter of course. That she accepted as part of life. But \$25 for an American set was indeed an expense which demanded all the help which the children could give. And here were green shoes, and Louisa ready to walk off with her dollar unless her mother kept quiet. She sighed heavily over her coffee. All the family contrary, and she with only the strength of a week of "spoon-food" to help her keep the peace.

"I've got a new job," announced Louisa, amid the silence of the dinner table. "The printing trade is too dirty and no raise in sight. I heard about a swell job from a fella who got his printing done at our place. It's pressed-aluminum-household-utensils," she rattled off all in one word, as incomprehensible to the rest of them as if she spoke in Arabic. "I start in next Monday with the firm—canvassing," she went on. "He says you make a lot of money on it too—salary and commission on the raffles."

"On the raffles?" asked May. "What raffles?"

"The raffles of the pressed-aluminum-household-utensils," said Louisa. "You go to the house and get the lady to give you her kitchen. Then you give her a meal cooked in the never-burn kettles, and then you raffle off the kettles to her after she's eat the dinner. The fella says you make a lotta money if you work it right."

"Sounds good," said May. "Any chance for me? I've got a place to hash at a hot-dog booth myself, but this sounds better. I'm tired of the factory," and she thought of the faithless Bud. It seemed to her that never again could she face the girls in her section, who had witnessed her discomfiture on the Dreamland dance floor.

Mr. and Mrs. Nyack had not the slightest idea of what this talk was about. Aluminum-raffles in other people's kitchens—it meant nothing to them. But money was an idea which they could grasp.

"How much more do you make?" asked Mr. Nyack.



"What's the commission?" demanded Joe, who had just come in.

"Who pays for the dinner?" inquired May.

"Who cooks the dinner?" murmured Mrs. Nyack faintly. "You ain't much of a cook, Louisa."

And then too late she saw her mistake. Louisa arose from the table in wrath.

"I didn't come home to answer questions," she said angrily. "You don't understand what I tell you, so what's the use of telling? I pay my own bills, don't I? I ask you for nothing, do I? Do ya think this dinner was worth the dollar I gave you? Can't I cook as well as this if I have to? Couldn't I have got the same for thirty-five cents downtown, and gone to a show beside?" she asked, her voice rising.

As a matter of fact, she was rather hazy on the details of her pressed-aluminum venture herself, but she had no idea of letting them guess it. She was very proud of her independence and her cleverness. She intended to dazzle them with her new job, but she had no idea of having it questioned.

May, glad to have attention diverted from her green shoes, made no effort to quell the rising storm, but Joe, who had been quietly eating his dinner, with a mysterious package by his side, felt that the time had now come to produce it. Joe was an odd combination of a working man and a small boy. He was a heavy, good-looking fellow of nineteen, but heedless as a child. He was his mother's favorite. He did hauling for a greenhouse which for the last two weeks had been plastered with the sign—"Say it with flowers to Mother on Mothers' Day." This sign had been the subject of considerable discussion among the men during their lunch hour, and Joe, who was really fond of his mother, had had his chivalry stirred. He would make his mother a present. He had however no idea of saying it with flowers. To pay good money for flowers, is something no Nyack would do except for a burial. But there was something else he decided to say it with, and unable in his eagerness to wait until the morrow, he shoved a large

package on to the table, toward his mother. Louisa might as well see that she was not the only one with big ideas. And as for May and her green slippers—his chest swelled to think how much more generous he was than she.

“Two bucks,” he murmured in an aside to May, but his father heard it.

“Two bucks?” he echoed with a puzzled frown.

As for Mrs. Nyack, she stared at the bundle without speaking. It was too large to be teeth, and what else would her children be wasting “two bucks” on, with that dentist bill to pay? As for Mothers’ Day she had never heard of it. She was entirely unaccustomed to any sentimental attitude toward motherhood, and the gallant desire in Joe’s breast to “say it with something” in emulation of the well-dressed American men who came to the greenhouse, was something she was incapable of understanding. She was so tired and worried by the vagaries of Louisa and May that she felt that she could stand nothing more, but she undid the strings doubtfully, and opened with caution the two boxes which lay within. She raised the lid of one box and then of the other and gazed at the contents with stupefaction—

*Caramels.*—Not one box, but two.

Two bucks for two boxes of tough chewing candy which made her jaws ache to look at, and which made her heart sick when she thought of the wasted money— Then instead of her heart sinking, her anger rose. Selfish children, all of them. Or were they teasing her? Or were they going crazy? She rose from the table and thrust out her forefinger at Joe.

“So you spend your money on muck I can’t eat, and call it a present, do you?” she cried, her color rising with her voice. “Where is the money you owe me? Did them boxes cost you two bucks, you young liar? You know they didn’t. You gambled away your money and stole the boxes, you crook. The police will be here next, and me always an honest woman,” she screamed, too worn out and hysterical to notice the utterly crestfallen look on her son’s face.



For a moment he looked as if he would cry with disappointment, and Louisa, who had always babied Joe more or less, hastily interposed—"Oh, Ma, shut up," she said. "That's on the straight. They cost that much. It's a swell present. That's right, tomorrow is Mother's Day," she added soothingly.

But Mothers' Day meant nothing to Mrs. Nyack, or to Mr. Nyack either. He turned on his son in enraged astonishment.

"So you're lifting boxes and gambling away your money, are you?" he shouted, and then he added from sheer nervousness and from long habit, the most opprobrious epithet that one man can give another. Joe rose to his feet like a cat and picked up his chair by the back. The others rose with him.

Obviously, if Joe was what his father called him, it was his mother who was demeaned by the epithet. Such an accusation was more than speech. It was violence. And from a husband to his son, before his wife—it was almost murder. Of course Mr. Nyack had meant nothing of the kind. He and his wife had had their daily quarrels to be sure. But he knew well enough that she had been entirely faithful to him and to his interests. His epithet to his son had been merely a manner of speaking. It had slipped out, with no reference to its meaning, because Mr. Nyack was tired and cross, and his children seemed to be smothering him with their outlandish whims. But when he saw his two daughters rising from the table against him, backed by a hysterical wife and a son ready to throw a chair at him, it entirely destroyed what self-restraint he had left after so wearing a day. He grasped his own chair aloft and threw it blindly. It hit the stove pipe, knocking it clear from the wall, and distributing the soot over the table and over the heads of the three screaming women.

Joe, his feelings a blind mixture of hurt pride, chagrin over his ill-chosen present, his realization that his mother could not be made to understand his motive, and wild wrath over his father's unjust epithet, flew at his father and pinned him to the floor by his throat. He began chok-

ing him so successfully that Mrs. Nyack, unable to bear more, gave a wild shriek and fell unconscious over the table. Louisa and May gave one horrified and disgusted glance at each other. Then Louisa clawed at Joe's throat, as the only available spot of attack where she could hope to weaken his grip on his father, and May, catching a pail of water from the kitchen sink, threw it impartially over all of them. By this time the clamor had risen to such a height that the neighbors were collecting outside the door.

"Help! Help!" screamed May, ready to fly into hysterics herself, as she saw that the soot and water between them had effectually devastated the green sandals for all time.

A crowd of neighbors pushed the door open at this cry, and Joe, his ardor somewhat cooled by the water and by the presence of the newcomers, rose sulkily to his feet. His father, after some preliminary grunts and snorts, did the same. In the shamefaced silence which followed, May elbowed her way through the crowd and into the street.

"It's the last night I spend with those devils," she called back to Louisa.

She marched out holding her head very high, conscious that the bystanders were tittering slightly over the mixture of soot and green dye with which she was plastered. She knew a place where she could go and fix herself up, and a fellow who would give her some swell shoes. She had been shy about taking favors from him before, especially since she preferred Bud. But any place but home was the way she now felt, and any source for shoes since her new ones had been ruined. What did anything matter after such humiliation?

"I'm through with the damned hole myself," muttered Joe, as he slouched out of the door in the wake of his sister.

Once in the street he turned in a different direction, toward the freight yards. He too knew where he could go.

Louisa, being the eldest, felt some slight responsibility toward her mother, until she at least recovered speech, and toward her father until she was sure that he would



not be arrested. As for May or Joe, she knew from her own experience that they would take no advice from her, so she let them alone. When her parents had both recovered themselves enough to sit up and explain matters volubly to the neighbors, Louisa gave a slight shrug of disgust at the unclean room suddenly become abhorrent to her, and slipped quietly out of the back door.

The aluminum-kettle raffles did not turn out very well. One thing led to another until Louisa and the manager of the enterprise were obliged to flee from the state together to escape the law. They did not come back. Neither did Joe. He sends out-of-the-way post cards to his mother from time to time. He seems to be in the navy, but his mother is not sure. She has not seen him since that night.

As for May she calls on her mother now and then with very handsome shoes and stockings, and she gives her parents a substantial present every Christmas.

They cannot understand where she gets the money and they shake their heads over the vague accounts which she gives of herself. But what can they do? They are glad to get the presents for they need the money, and they are much too humbled by their children to dare to ask any inconvenient questions. The Battle of Bosworth Field was lost to King Richard, they tell us, all for the want of a horseshoe nail. The Battle of the Nyacks was lost by all parties to the conflict. None came out victorious. And why? Because all the combatants were too tired to be reasonable at seven P.M.

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**The Nature of Fatigue.**—Mrs. Wembridge's story portrays some of the overt manifestations of fatigue. It is evident that the consequences of excessive weariness may be far-reaching. It is also plain that, while fatigue and long working hours are commonly associated, each usually involves still other factors. Fatigue depends not merely on length of working day or week, but upon speed, ventilation, light and other conditions in the work place, as well as on the general physical and mental condition of the

worker. Long hours involve, as a general thing, not merely fatigue, but lack of opportunity for family life, wholesome recreation, education and participation in civic affairs. For the present we shall largely ignore these latter aspects of the long working day and concentrate our attention upon its relation to fatigue.

Mrs. Wembridge has defined fatigue as "exhaustion of strength caused by excessive exertion. If fatigue is abnormally continued, the nervous system goes through a stage of heightened sensitivity, or hyper-esthesia, when it is affected by stimuli which would be relatively unimportant at other times. People who are in a continual state of over-fatigue, and who are unable to recuperate by the usual means of change of scene, quiet, privacy, become chronically irritable."<sup>2</sup> The British Health of Munition Workers' Committee says with regard to the problem that, "Fatigue of the animal machine is not to be compared with the failure of fuel in a steam engine, or with the running down of a clock weight, but rather with the clogging of the wheels in some mechanism by dirt."<sup>3</sup> Fatigue has also been defined as a "diminution of the capacity for work which follows excess of work or lack of rest, and which is recognized on the subjective side by a characteristic malaise." Vernon points out, however, that the subjective tired feeling and the objective capacity for work do not always run parallel courses.<sup>4</sup> Indeed, this whole problem is very perplexing. It appears that fatigue involves (1) the consumption of the material from which energy for muscular contraction is obtained, and (2) the accumulation of poisonous substances. It further appears that fatigue may arise in the muscular system, or in the central nervous system, or in both. But there are varying opinions among physiologists and psychologists as to just what part of the individual is really fatigued and what are the mechanisms, chemical, physical and psychological, of fatigue.

<sup>2</sup> Survey, 53: 28.

<sup>3</sup> British Health of Munition Workers Committee, Memorandum No. 7, p. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Vernon, H. M., *Industrial Fatigue and Efficiency*, p. 1.



**Measures of Fatigue.**<sup>5</sup>—One of the most common bases for estimating fatigue is the output per hour, per day, or other unit of time. The amount of work done usually increases during the first part of the work period, after which there is ordinarily a decrease with sometimes a final spurt just before quitting time. It is usually assumed, and probably correctly, that the decrease in output is due to increasing fatigue. A second measure involves use of a spring-balance muscle test. When applied at the beginning and end of a work period this shows that in the more strenuous operations there is a diminution of the strength of the workers. A third measure is known as “Ryan’s Vascular Skin Reaction Test.” This consists in making a stroke on the skin of the forearm with some blunt instrument and by means of a stop-watch determining the time between the moment of the stimulation and that at which the white streak thus caused begins to fade. This time is shorter in a fatigued person. Some of the studies in British munition factories indicate that a fourth measure may lie in the lessened acuity of sight and hearing. Finally, use has been made by some experimenters of urinalysis. In the urine of fatigued persons there is found to be a higher degree of concentration of hydrogen ions than in those who are not fatigued.

In most of the studies which have been made attention is centered on the first of the measures described, namely, output per hour, per week or per month. But the application of this method is subject to serious error, unless the investigator is very careful to eliminate other variables such as labor turnover, acquisition of skill, deterioration of plant, changes in mechanical processes and attitudes of workmen. However, if due allowance is made for these factors, or if it is possible to eliminate or otherwise control them, the results of studies based on output should have great value in determining the nature and consequences of fatigue.

<sup>5</sup> Lee, F. S., *The Human Machine and Industrial Efficiency*, pp. 11-16.

**Some Causes of Fatigue.**—Some writers have perhaps unwittingly given the impression that fatigue is a direct and exclusive result of long hours. Others have called attention to additional industrial causes of fatigue such as speed, noise, etc., but relatively few students of this problem have pointed out the significance of causes which are not primarily industrial. We shall discuss briefly each of these several groups of factors.

Among the important industrial causes are (a) speed of machinery and (b) complexity of processes. These are most obvious in such work as that of telephone operators, weavers and spinners. Along with speed and complexity must be considered (c) monotony. Continuous use of the same muscle or sense organ may be quite as damaging to the body as much heavier work which is more varied. In some canneries the constant repetition of simple motions combined with the severe strain upon the eyes leads frequently to nausea and dizziness. (d) Noise is a factor which is difficult to separate from the others. Under the influence of loud noises attention is distracted and the strain of concentration upon the task in hand is greatly increased. (e) Improper lighting and ventilation are also contributing factors. The difficulties of illumination may be due to lack of windows, insufficient number of artificial lights or, at the other extreme, too great a glare on the workbench or material. (f) Improper ventilation means sometimes that the air is full of dust, sometimes that it is hot and humid and most frequently that it is not changed. (g) Mechanical rhythms add to the difficulties of the factory worker. He must adapt himself to the speed of the machine and submit himself in every way to its domination. Whether he be fresh or tired he must work at the same rate which is set for him by the machine he is watching and operating.

Along with these more mechanical causes of fatigue are some which have to do primarily with the organization and management of an establishment. (h) Piece work, for example, tends to speed up workers because pay is usually adjusted to the pace of the most rapid. Its very purpose



is to stimulate the workers to greater and greater exertion in the hope of increasing their earnings. But, as a matter of fact, they often fail to achieve this goal because no sooner do they acquire greater speed than the rate of pay per piece is reduced. (i) In many instances workers occupy uncomfortable and unnecessarily strained positions. They have to reach too far for tools, must stand when they might more economically sit, or use stools or benches when chairs with backs would be a real advantage. (j) Besides all this, the workers themselves often make their work unnecessarily difficult, going through an excessive number of motions which are not needed in performing their task. For example, it has been found that the customary way of laying bricks involves 18 motions of which 11 could be omitted altogether and the remainder so combined that they would be reduced to two. (k) Overtime is another factor. It means not merely the extending of a day that is already sufficiently long. More serious than that is the irregularity which it involves. The same charge can be brought against (l) night work. It imposes on the organism an abnormal sequence of activities; the sleep which is supposed to be secured by day is often interrupted by light, noise, domestic duties and the lure of an active world. Hence those who work at night are apt to suffer more from fatigue than those who work by day. Moreover, their output is frequently less and of poorer quality.

Now among the causes of fatigue which are not primarily industrial must be counted poor food, poor housing, inability to secure needed rest, worry, fear, suppressed or thwarted impulses and anything which may lower the general physical or mental tone of the worker. Of course, poor food and poor housing may take us right back to industry for their explanation, because the worker whose wages are low obviously cannot have a satisfactory diet, a comfortable and attractive place in which to live or the privacy which is essential for both physical and mental relaxation. If there is friction at home, if he is worried because of sickness or impending loss of his job, if he is denied recognition and the opportunity to advance, he is

certain to be in a frame of mind which will interfere with effective work and bring him to the end of a day utterly worn out. Hence, in any study of fatigue all these possibilities must be considered.

**Hours Actually Worked in American Industries.**—In Chapter XV, we showed that a large number of women workers are employed for such long hours per day and per week that excessive fatigue is almost certain to result. The following table indicates the general situation for all employes in industrial establishments in the United States. While it shows that a large number are still forced to work more than ten hours a day and sixty hours a week, there is a constant tendency toward a shortening of hours in American industries.

AVERAGE NUMBER OF WAGE EARNERS AND HOURS OF LABOR  
PER WEEK: 1919, 1914, AND 1909 <sup>6</sup>

Prevailing Hours of Labor, per Week	Average Number			Per Cent of Total		
	1919	1914	1909	1919	1914	1909
Total.....	9,096,372	7,036,247	6,615,046	100.0	100.0	100.0
44 and under.....	1,111,107	.....	.....	12.2		
Between 44 and 48...	346,179	.....	.....	3.8		
48 <sup>7</sup> .....	2,961,407	833,330	523,652	32.6	11.9	7.9
Between 48 and 54...	1,496,177	945,735	481,157	16.4	13.4	7.3
54.....	828,353	1,818,390	1,019,438	9.1	25.8	15.4
Between 54 and 60...	1,248,854	1,543,018	1,999,307	13.7	21.9	30.2
60.....	827,745	1,487,801	2,017,280	9.1	21.1	30.5
Over 60.....	276,550	407,973	574,212	3.0	5.8	8.7

In 1919, in 194 industries, the greatest number of wage earners was employed 48 hours or less per week, as compared with 25 industries in 1914. Only 42 industries in 1919 show the greatest number of wage earners in establishments operating 60 hours or more per week, as compared with 83 in 1914. In 1919 there were 33 industries

<sup>6</sup> Abstract of the Census of Manufactures, 1919, p. 444.

<sup>7</sup> Includes 48 and under for 1914 and 1909.



in which the prevailing hours of labor were 44 hours or under per week. Comparative figures for 1914 are not available.

In the East South Central and the West South Central divisions the greatest number of wage earners in 1919 were employed 60 hours or more per week while in the other seven divisions the prevailing hours per week were 48 and under.

**Economic Results of Industrial Fatigue.**—Diminished output is at once a result and a measure of the workers' fatigue. But at the same time this statement is made it is important to add that many other factors also influence the output and unless they are equalized, it is not fair to assume that fatigue parallels the descending curve of production. The Illinois Industrial Survey Commission<sup>8</sup> in 1918 made a study of a soap-making plant which had reduced its standard hours per day from 10 to 8½ and its standard week from 55 to 48 hours. A group of 24 workers was selected for the study. These had all been in the employ of the company at the same tasks—wrapping and packing a standard brand of soap, for at least three years. They were carefully observed for ten weeks under the longer and ten weeks under the shorter schedule. During both periods the department was running to capacity and so far as could be determined there were no changes in working conditions other than the hours. The result of the study showed that not only was there no reduction in output when hours were reduced, but on the contrary there was an actual increase. Under the 55 hour week each worker packed on the average 42.8 cases of soap per day. Under the 48 hour week average production per day was 45.5 cases.

Errors and mistakes seem to increase as the workers become fatigued. Miss Goldmark refers to a number of experiments which support this belief. The following table is based on a study of the work of four typesetters of a printing house in Florence, Italy.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Illinois Industrial Survey, *Hours and Health of Women Workers*, pp. 71-80.

<sup>9</sup> Goldmark, Josephine, *Fatigue and Efficiency*, pp. 135-6.

OUTPUT OF FOUR TYPESETTERS, SHOWING INCREASE OF ERRORS  
WITH INCREASE OF FATIGUE

Hours.....	8-9	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-2	2-3	3-4	4-5
Number of Lines Set:								
Total.....	84	104	92	86	Rest	99	82	64
Average.....	21	26	23	21.5	"	24.7	20.2	16
Errors:								
Total.....	17	10	18.28	28	"	5.5	22.6	30
Average.....	4.25	2.5	4.57	7	"	1.37	5.45	7.6

Concerning the relation of fatigue to industrial accidents there is a great deal of dispute. Miss Goldmark cites numerous studies which indicate that the largest number of accidents occur toward the close of the work period—forenoon or afternoon. The last hour, however, shows fewer accidents than the next to the last, apparently in some cases because of a slowing down, in others because a smaller number was at work and in others because of the final spurt which men make when the end is in view. A study of 15,000 accidents shows that the largest percentage occurs between 9 and 10 A.M., the next largest between 3 and 4 P.M.<sup>10</sup> It is interesting to note that these figures which are cited in order to establish a causal relation between fatigue and accidents might quite as legitimately be used to demonstrate the opposite hypothesis. More than one-half of these accidents occurred in the forenoon. Now if they were due in any large measure to fatigue there should have been a larger proportion of accidents in the afternoon. Similar studies in Great Britain also cause us to doubt the assumption of an immediate connection between fatigue and accidents. Vernon found that among employes working more than 55 hours a week the ratio of afternoon to morning accidents was .96.<sup>11</sup> In industries where the weekly hours were less than 55 the ratio of afternoon to morning accidents was 1.08. The average ratio

<sup>10</sup> Goldmark, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>11</sup> Vernon, H. M., *Industrial Fatigue and Efficiency*, pp. 185-186.



for the whole set of data was 1.01. "So we must conclude that in ordinary industries under normal hours of work there is no good evidence that the rise of accidents observed during the work spells is due to fatigue."

**Fatigue and Broken Health.**—Susceptibility to disease has been commonly assumed to result directly from industrial fatigue, but this hypothesis, like the one concerning industrial accidents, is still in need of verification. Sir James Paget is quoted as saying, "You will find that fatigue has a larger share in the promotion or transmission of disease than any other single causal condition you can name."<sup>12</sup> Over against this we have the opinion of Vernon "that the effects of exposure to the weather and of resting from work when in a state of perspiration are more potent causes of sickness and death than the fatigue incident to hot and heavy work."<sup>13</sup>

All these data suggest that fatigue itself is not the exclusive result of long hours or strenuous labor and that the sickness which comes upon working people can not often be attributed directly or solely to fatigue. There must be taken into consideration such other factors as the workman's native constitution, his home life, his use of leisure time, and his exposure to specific infections. However, there is enough evidence to lend considerable importance to the hypothesis that excessive fatigue breaks the worker's power of resistance and makes him more susceptible to any communicable disease.

In one of the British ordnance factories<sup>14</sup> the men lost 7 per cent of their time because of illness when they were working 63½ hours per week, but only 4 per cent when the hours were reduced to 54 a week. The women at the same factory lost 4.3 per cent of their time from sickness when they were on a 54 hour week, but only 2.8 per cent when working 44½ hours a week. Medical examination of 3,000 men and boys in 8 British munition factories showed the

<sup>12</sup> Quoted by Lee, F. S., *The Human Machine and Industrial Efficiency*, p. 79.

<sup>13</sup> Vernon, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

<sup>14</sup> Vernon, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

following interesting results.<sup>15</sup> Of men aged 41 and over who were engaged in heavy labor over 70 hours a week, 31 per cent were in subnormal health. Of those who were working less than 70 hours a week, 21 per cent were in subnormal health. Of boys aged 18 or less, engaged in heavy labor, more than 60 hours a week, 11 per cent were in subnormal health. Of those who were working less than 60 hours only 5 per cent were in subnormal health. Similar ratios obtained for men and boys engaged in medium or light labor.

When we turn to the relation of fatigue to nervous and mental disorders we again find ourselves in the midst of conflicting testimony. Miss Goldmark presents considerable evidence which indicates that industrial fatigue contributes rather directly to nervous and mental breakdown, mentioning specifically, neurasthenia and hysteria. But Dr. White<sup>16</sup> points out that hysteria is a purely mental disease and that "work of any character or description or of any degree of severity could not be conceived to be a cause in any true sense. We all know that if we have some weak point in our bodies that it bothers us more when we are below par and we are able to adjust to it better when we are in good health. . . . In the same way and only in that way can occupations or fatigue of any kind be said to be a causative factor of hysteria. They can only be adjuvant causes at best and at that, as will be seen, unimportant ones." Similar comments are made with reference to neurasthenia, for example, among telephone operators. These girls are in a sense side-tracked at about the period of puberty and called upon to make a complete readjustment to an entirely alien interest. Some of them succeed while others fail. Under favorable conditions of employment and home life most of them manage to get along. With prolonged hours of work and irritating conditions, especially if coupled with unhygienic and insanitary living, they break down. From these and from

<sup>15</sup> Vernon, *op. cit.*, pp. 168-9.

<sup>16</sup> White, W. A., *Principles of Mental Hygiene*, pp. 226-9.



other apparently conflicting data the layman is probably warranted in assuming that personal, domestic and industrial factors combine to produce nervous and mental disorders; that when fatigue is present it exaggerates other unfortunate conditions and does increase the probability of a breakdown.

Some of the older studies set forth the theory that fatigue in women workers results in a low birth rate and a high infant death rate. As a matter of fact, it is not difficult to show that where large numbers of women are employed in industry the birth rate is usually rather low and the infant mortality rate high. But this may be bound up with quite other factors than industrial fatigue. Perhaps the employment of women involves relatively late marriage. Perhaps both the employment and the infant mortality are traceable to poverty with the attendant lack of proper nourishment and medical attention. This is just one more situation in which the conflicting data emphasize the need of further research.

**Personal and Social Consequences of Fatigue.**—While the relations of fatigue to industry and to health are difficult to measure, the problems they present are much simpler than those involved in the relations of fatigue to personality and group life. Because adequate data are lacking, we shall have to content ourselves for the present with inferences and hypotheses.

It is not hard to see, in a general way, what was the rôle of fatigue in the disintegration of the Nyack family. It might be called one of the precipitating causes of the family crisis. Yet fatigue did not operate alone; as no factor ever operates alone in human affairs. There was growing tension due to the mother's old world ways and her children's too rapid Americanization. There was a good deal of plain ignorance. There was a low income and lack of privacy in the crowded apartment. Yet it is possible that, in spite of all these sources of friction, the Nyack family might have held together, but for the fact that "things happened all at once" when everybody was tired. This account makes us wonder in how many other cases

of family disorganization fatigue would have been found a significant factor had the whole story been told.

It would be profitable for some one to make a study of the relation of fatigue to social isolation. The hypothesis seems plausible that fatigue tends to reduce the number and variety of one's contacts. It may limit a person to a monotonous round of work and sleep. If the tired man or woman does go to church, lodge, union meeting, dance or theater, it may require more of an effort than it would if fatigue were absent. He can neither give so much of himself nor derive so much from others as when he is rested and his nerves are calm. On the other hand, he may go quite eagerly, seeking relief from the monotony of industry and home. In so doing he may use up reserve strength. Since he is "going on his nerve," he is likely to be impulsive and unreasonable. His personal relationship may be quite stimulating, but they are not likely to be wholesome.

There seems to be little doubt that fatigue is somehow bound up with irritability—at least for many people. Hence we believe that many personality disorders might be corrected, or even prevented, if the victims could only have a good rest. We suspect that fatigue together with insecurity (as exemplified by irregular employment) may play an important rôle in social unrest. When men and women are tired from long days of monotonous labor and when they find little relaxation or diversion at home, they are likely to seek blindly some outlet for pent-up emotions; they may easily be excited, not merely as individuals, but as a crowd; they may follow erratic leaders into bizarre social movements. It is possible that not only "radicalism," but the Ku Klux Klan, "hundred percentism," fundamentalism and other little understood social movements may be traced in part to such situations as these. All of which we offer as hypotheses, with the hope that some time they may be tested and we may know more about the personal and social consequences of fatigue.

**Experiments With Shorter Hours.**—We have already mentioned the case of an Illinois soap factory in which reduced hours not only did not cut down production but



were accompanied by an increased output. Numerous examples of the same sort might be cited, but this result is not always achieved. For example, the National Industrial Conference Board, an employers' organization, found a loss of output accompanying the reduction of hours in shoe factories from 54 per week in 1916 to 49½ per week in 1917.<sup>17</sup> It is interesting, however, to note that when the hours in British shoe factories were reduced from 55½ to 46½ there was no loss of output.<sup>18</sup> Unfortunately the British studies covered a smaller number of workers and plants; hence their findings are not entirely conclusive. On the other hand, the National Industrial Conference Board represents the viewpoint of employers who are naturally suspicious of movements to reduce hours. The Board also compared the output immediately before and after the change in hours instead of waiting for an equilibrium to be established. Incidentally, its questionnaire method was likely the source of more or less inaccuracy.

Some of the most careful experiments with shorter hours which have ever been made were those in British munition factories during the recent war. The following table summarizes the results of a number of these studies.

RESULTS OF STUDYING FUSE OPERATIONS IN BRITISH  
MUNITION FACTORIES<sup>19</sup>

Operation	Speeding Up of Operation Possible	Reduction of Weekly Hours of Actual Work	Alteration of Total Output Effected
Men sizing	Throughout and without limit	58.2 to 50.4 (7.8)	+19%
Women turning fuse bodies	Throughout to a limited extent	66 to 47.5 (18.5)	+13%
Women milling screw thread	For a fifth of the total time taken	64.9 to 48.1 (16.8)	- 1%
Youths boring top caps	Not at all	70.6 to 54.5 (16.1)	- 7%

<sup>17</sup> *National Industrial Conference Board, Research Report No. 7.*

<sup>18</sup> Vernon, *op. cit.*, pp. 67-8.

<sup>19</sup> Vernon, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

country of old-world folkways, but without the protection for the girl in subsequent marriage which the European peasant mores afford." In the second type, called the "mobility triangle," the two points representing the homes of the boy and the girl are located within a single neighborhood or community, but the place of delinquency is outside. "In this case the bright light area becomes a place of freedom from the narrower, distant controls of the home and the neighborhood." Type three is called the "triangle of promiscuity" because no two of the points lie in the same local area. "The intimacy developing from the casual acquaintance of the metal worker from the steel mills with the girl from the West Side, whom he 'picked up' at an amusement park, may be so transient that neither knows the family name or the address of the other." The significant fact that seems to stand out in Miss Buchan's study is the relatively high proportion of cases in which the triangle is of the third type.

Finally, among environmental factors, should be named war, militarism and vocations which require the living apart of large numbers of men. One of the most definite measures of the influence of war, its glamour, excitement and release from conventional morality, is to be found in the illegitimacy rates of certain European cities from 1913 to 1917.<sup>13</sup> In Paris the percentages of illegitimate births increased from 23.8 in 1912 to 31.7 in 1917. In London, the percentage increased from 4.5 in 1914, to 8.0 in 1918. In contrast, however, to these figures, are those from Berlin where the percentages increased only from 23.3 in 1913 to 23.8 in 1916.

**Problems Faced by the Unmarried Mother.**—The problems faced by the unmarried mother may be summarily stated in terms of (1) threatened loss of social status, (2) recovery of lost social status, (3) acquisition of status in a new social group. (1) In order that she may not lose her standing in family, neighborhood, church or friendship circle, the first problem of the unmarried woman under the circumstances we are discussing may be how to prevent

<sup>13</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 66, p. 15.



conception. Failing in that, or perhaps not having considered it at all, her next problem is how to interrupt or conceal pregnancy. This may lead her to bring on a miscarriage or abortion. If the pregnancy cannot be prevented, the next problem is how to arrange a secret confinement, and after the birth the question is, shall she keep the child or dispose of it. If she decides to keep it, she will almost certainly lose, if she has not already lost, her social standing. But having decided to keep the child, she has the economic problem of how to support herself and infant. If her decision is against keeping the child, then her problem is how to dispose of it so that no one among her former associates may ever know of its existence. (2) If her plight is discovered by members of her own social group, the unmarried woman's problem is how to recover her lost standing. Shall she marry the father in order "to give her child a name," or to "make herself an honest woman"? If so, how can she induce him to marry her without unpleasant notoriety? If he refuses or if she prefers not to marry him anyway, how else may she recover the lost status? This may lead her to some form of religious or social penance, devotion to relatives or to the church. (3) If her old social status is lost and if she does not try to recover it, or if her attempt is a failure, her problem becomes that of acquiring status in a new group. If she is afraid to return home or has been rejected by her old associates, where shall she turn? Shall it be to the mission or to the rescue home? Shall she seek employment and residence in a new community or shall she turn to the life of the street? The mere enumeration of some of these problems should make plain the tremendous difficulties faced by the unmarried mother and should remind us that the story of Ruth Gaines has a rather unusually happy outcome.

**Handicaps of the Illegitimate Child.**—The hazards of being an illegitimate child may be roughly classified as physical, mental, economic, legal and social. The chances of an illegitimate child being stillborn are, according to various studies, about twice as great as those of the child

13 per cent and men who had been working intermittently on Sunday increased their output 13 per cent in spite of an average loss of 5 hours of work.<sup>23</sup> These experiments and observations have not yet gone far enough to be conclusive, but they indicate that in many instances "seven days' labor produces only a six day output."

**Restrictive Legislation.**—The restriction of working hours and the elimination of other conditions productive of fatigue have come about in several different ways. Some times the employer has discovered that the long day works against his own financial interests. More frequently the pressure of trade unions has forced employers to reduce the hours and modify other conditions which increase fatigue. But along with the steady pressure of trade unions and the occasional insights of employers has come a growing body of restrictive legislation.

The first legislative regulation of hours of labor in the United States applied to children. Attempts at legal control of working hours for women came next. Since the Oregon ten-hour law for women was upheld by the United States Supreme Court in 1908, this legislation has been on a secure footing and has spread rapidly over the country. By 1920 only six states had placed no restrictions on women's hours of labor, many had limited them to eight or nine a day and the majority had a weekly limit of less than sixty hours.

In contrast with the considerable development of such regulations for women and children is the rudimentary development of legislation affecting the working hours of adult men. Most of these laws cover only employes on public works or in transportation. In the former case the state is merely regulating the working conditions of its own employes; in the latter it is acting in the interest of public safety. During the Civil War period laws restricting the hours of labor of men in private employment were passed by a number of states, but these were found to be unenforceable. In recent years hours have been limited by means of collective bargaining rather than by legislation.

<sup>23</sup> Vernon, *op. cit.*, p. 16.



There have been, however, important exceptions. Over half of the states have by law shortened the hours of railway employes, and more than a dozen states have eight-hour laws for workers in mines and smelters. Mississippi in 1912 and Oregon in 1913 passed ten-hour laws for employes in manufacturing industries.

While we are interested in this restrictive legislation and the results which it may achieve, we must guard against expecting the impossible from it. Because, as we have already pointed out, fatigue is the product of numerous factors in addition to hours and other conditions of labor, it can not be controlled by legislation alone. It would hardly be possible to legislate out of existence such causal factors as worry, domestic friction, over-exertion in leisure time, crowd excitement and habits of irregular living. These are to be dealt with, if at all, through personal adjustments, and modification of the folkways.

#### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write as objectively as possible your own experiences in fatigue. What, so far as you can determine, were the causal factors? What were the effects in terms of your physical health, your emotions, your mental alertness, your relations to other people?
2. Secure similar data from a number of other people; write them down as accurately and as fully as you can.
3. Find out the regular hours of work in factories and stores in your home district. Indicate in each case the number of workers involved. Is overtime common?
4. Secure corresponding information for other industries and trades.
5. Consult working people with reference to what they consider the most important causes of fatigue in their own work.
6. Write abstracts of reports of investigations into the relation of hours of labor, fatigue and output.
7. Learn what schemes have been introduced by employers in your home district to reduce fatigue among their workers. Note, e.g., rest periods, seats, changed lighting, rotation of tasks, reduction of hours.
8. Write abstracts of the laws of your state which have to do with hours of labor. Examine reports of the department charged with enforcement of these laws.

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## CHAPTER XVIII

### INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS

#### HOWARD WHITE AND HIS FAMILY

*Mr. Howard White.*—Shortly before Christmas, 1912, Mr. White, while working on a sewer, was seriously injured by an explosion. He had not been employed as a "powder man," but had "set off a shot" which exploded in his face. Mr. White's face and hand were burned; his sight was entirely destroyed. Because there was no workmen's compensation law in this state, plans were made to bring suit against the employer for damages.

A letter written three months after his accident contains this description of the injured man: "Mr. White is 33 years old; has no education, says he was in school very little,—and has never done anything but day labor. Has done such work as quarrying and excavating. Shows no special aptitude so far as we are able to discover. Has been a good, steady workman, and has taken care of his family without aid. Is said to have had the habit of drinking, but not greatly to excess. Uses tobacco. Has been very cheerful and courageous since the accident that deprived him of sight, but is beginning to grow depressed,—doubtless from inaction. Seems quite intelligent and sensible." It is interesting to note the changes in Mr. White's circumstances and personality during the next ten years.

First of all, Mr. White retained an attorney on a 50 per cent contingent basis. After a delay of one year a settlement was agreed upon, whereby the employer paid \$3,000. Out of his \$1,500 Mr. White paid \$1,200 for a house, the remainder for furniture and current expenses. In the meantime, the Family Welfare Society together with



various benevolent individuals, churches, clubs, etc., provided the necessities of life. Of these we shall have more to say anon, for it is Mr. White himself with whom we are now concerned.

Being deprived of his usual source of income, he began to sell pencils, shoestrings and newspapers on the street. He insisted that this brought him very little, especially while school was in session and he could not have one of the children to lead him around. However, it was later discovered that he, like many another "street merchant," was using these articles as a camouflage for begging from which he probably received from \$2.00 to \$4.00 a day. We do not know the exact amount, for Mr. White has steadfastly refused to tell. The Family Welfare Society tried very hard to induce him to give up his begging, but he never stopped except for a short time. Although there was a state law making this a misdemeanor, the police were not inclined to enforce it. Mrs. White told a social worker that a policeman advised her husband to pay no attention to threats about stopping his soliciting on the street. Some nine years after the accident Mr. White was helped to start up a small business, selling candy, pop-corn, soda pop, etc., in a booth opposite a large factory. But he did not stick to this very long; he seemed to prefer to loaf around home or to beg on the street.

Within one year of the accident Mr. White had been so far demoralized as to feel that the charitable people of the city must help him, but that he needed no advice from anyone as to the management of his personal affairs. As time went on he became less willing to listen to suggestions and talked as though the world owed him a living regardless of any efforts made on his own behalf. When, after ten years, his allowance from the Family Welfare Society was cut off, because he was receiving a pension for the blind, the two older children were earning and a position was offered to his wife, Mr. White was quite furious. He denounced the society, the Association for the Blind, the administration of the blind pension law and everybody in general. "The society could take its money and go to Hell

with it." The Association for the Blind (a non-sectarian organization) he declared was run by the Catholics; the Bishop and Mrs. Strong, the President, were putting the money into their own pockets. When told that the Family Welfare Society was still willing to help arrange for his admission to a school for the blind or to a workshop where he could learn broom-making, he continued his tirade. "No blind man could make brooms"; "The wages paid were an insult," etc. It must not be imagined that these changes in personality came about suddenly as a result of the accident. On the contrary, it seems quite plain that they developed gradually and rather naturally as this ignorant man found himself baffled by new and difficult situations.

There were some minor health problems—bad teeth, pains in the back and inflammation about the eyes—but they were easily dealt with, in contrast to the difficulties of personal adjustment which seem never to have been overcome.

*Mrs. White*, born in 1888, presented more serious health problems. She had a goiter, for which an operation was found necessary. The Wassermann was "four-plus," so she was given treatments for syphilis. Altogether she gave birth to eleven children, two of whom died in infancy. Three were given in adoption immediately after birth, so she reared only six.

It was generally agreed that *Mrs. White* was a good housekeeper, wise in her buying, and resourceful in making the children's clothes. But, like her husband, she gradually became demoralized. She learned to beg and was not above lying in order to secure the desired response. For example, the King's Daughters had been cooperating with the Family Welfare Society, furnishing certain forms of material relief. One day *Mrs. White* appeared at their meeting with a plea for clothes on the ground that the Family Welfare Society had reduced the allowance to her family from \$7 to \$5 a week. As a matter of fact, there had not been at that time any reduction at all. She held back information about the employment of the children



and her husband's earnings. She tried to limit her conversations with the social workers to requests for material relief. Naturally they regarded her as uncooperative. Yet perhaps her reticence is not wholly to be condemned. Once when she was reproved for lack of frankness Mrs. White's eyes filled with tears and she replied that she could not bear to discuss her family affairs with strangers. She had so many troubles to bear, what was the use of telling other people about them? It is hard to determine how far this should be regarded as an honest statement of natural reticence and how far it should be judged in the light of her growing propensity for begging.

In her relations to the children Mrs. White presented some puzzling contrasts. In 1915 she was credited with encouraging their fighting with neighbor children and even with joining them in hair-pulling and mud-throwing. As a consequence she was haled into court and fined \$50 for disturbing the peace. Her eagerness for the children to drop out of school to earn money is not difficult to understand in view of the family's circumstances. Perhaps the same explanation may be offered for her willingness to give up the last three babies for adoption. Yet the social workers noted her affection for the children, and after a visit in 1921, one of them wrote: "Mrs. White seems to have splendid control of the children and a beautiful spirit of cooperation seems to exist between them."

In the earlier years it was important for Mrs. White to stay at home for the sake of the children, but when they were older it might have been wise for her to go out to work. At all events this was urged and a position was actually offered, but she steadfastly refused to accept it and insisted that her place was in the home. One might suspect that she was right, but for her attitude in some other matters. Once when she asked for bedding, the social worker agreed to provide the necessary material if Mrs. White would make it up into comforts. She, however, carefully ignored the suggestion, indicating thus, as on many other occasions, an unwillingness to help herself. Toward the end of her relations with the Family Welfare Society

she joined her husband in his tirades against social workers, the state, and things in general. But in her case, as in his, it is important to note that these characteristics seemed to be the product of the uncertain economic status and the necessity for accepting relief over an extended period of time. They were much more marked in 1923 than in 1913.

*Dan White*, born in 1904, was the oldest child. His history displays the undoubted influences of a disorganized home life and demoralized parents. First of all was child labor. At the age of nine he went on the streets to help his father sell papers. However, he attended school fairly regularly until he was nearly 14, when he dropped out entirely to work in a rubber factory. He did not stay long on this job, and his employer was not sorry that he left, for he described Dan as "a regular tough; he shoots craps and smokes cigarettes." He next became a delivery boy for a department store. Here for a time he seemed to be doing well and received an increase in wages. Also under the provisions of a new law he attended part-time school. But this did not last long; Dan was caught "shooting craps" and encouraging the other delivery boys to loaf when they were supposed to be at work, so he was discharged.

Shortly after that he was taken into Juvenile Court for breaking into a store, along with two neighbor boys, and stealing candy, cookies, etc. He was sentenced to an industrial school, but the sentence was suspended and he was put on probation. Some effort was made to find a place for him in the country, but instead Dan tried to enlist in the navy. He was rejected on account of his youth, and then went to work in a machine shop, where he stayed just one week. Next he tried a mail-order house where he seemed to be starting off well, but remained only a month. On his last pay day, the family was waiting for his return with the week's wages to buy some groceries. He did not come until very late and his money was gone. He refused to tell what he had done with it, and said he didn't see why he could not spend his own money as other boys did. When



they remonstrated with him, he became sulky and threatened to leave home, which indeed he did.

The next we hear of Dan is that he was in the Industrial School under a three-year sentence. Whether it was for violation of his probation or on a new charge is not quite clear. In the Industrial School he finished the seventh grade, learned something about electricity and became interested in wrestling. But the superintendent reported that he smoked, lied, made promises which he never kept and was altogether a difficult boy to manage. After a year in the institution, Dan was paroled, returned home and got a job "in the packing house district," but refused to let the social worker know where. (Evidently the parole officer did not pay much attention to him.) In 1922, when he was 18, Dan enlisted in the army using his middle name as his last. The following year, he was back at home again, having been discharged for some reason. Very soon he was arrested and found guilty of robbing a grocery store. Undoubtedly we do not have all the causal factors in this case of delinquency, but there seems to be a pretty definite relation between the father's inability to supervise the activities of his growing boy and the development of anti-social traits.

*Other Children.*—Lack of space forbids that we should discuss the younger children as fully as we did Dan. For the present we can only note that they all presented health problems, and Celia, the oldest girl, was believed to be sexually immoral. At the age of sixteen she was married to a "wild boy," and thereby leaped from the frying pan into the fire.

*Relief and Service Rendered.*—Because the state made no adequate provision for injured workmen, it was quite necessary for material relief to be given to this family. Perhaps better planning would have reduced its amount and duration, but, however that may be, between \$7,000 and \$8,000 was given directly or indirectly over a period of ten years. In addition to the Family Welfare Society numerous churches, clubs, and "benevolent individuals" contributed to the support of the Whites. They were

given groceries, clothing, furniture and coal; their house was painted and papered, the roof repaired, privy vault cleaned, plumbing installed; finally a state pension for the blind was made available.

The Family Welfare Society tried very hard to induce Mr. White to enter some school for the blind, but he stubbornly refused. Neither would he accept the offer of an opportunity to learn broommaking in a workshop for the blind. Arrangements were made to set him up in business, but, as we have seen, he did not make a success of his booth, nor apparently of anything else except peddling and begging. Medical services were rendered the various members of the family by two hospitals and two dispensaries. Violations of the child labor law were checked up, school attendance was encouraged, and later help was given in finding positions for Mrs. White, Dan and Celia. Another blind man went in to encourage Mr. White, and to show him what things were still possible for him, even though he had lost his sight. A teacher of the blind visited the home and gave a few lessons in caning chairs, but was unable to enlist any real interest on the part of Mr. White.

Probably the most important, though not the most successful, part of the treatment was the continued effort to stimulate Mr. White and his family to take the initiative in working out their own problems. This seems to have been almost a complete failure, but the reasons are not clear. Perhaps there was at the outset an overindulgence in a certain type of "sympathy" and well meant but ill advised generosity. Apparently the tradition of helplessness of the blind helped to break down morale faster than busy social workers could build it up.

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There are some interesting similarities between the experiences of the White and the Jenkins families.<sup>1</sup> Although Mr. Jenkins' accident was fatal, while Mr. White survived his, both occurred in a state which had no workmen's com-

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. II.



pensation law. Both cases were taken to court, and in both cases the lawyers were the chief beneficiaries. Both families found it necessary to accept material aid, and both were more or less demoralized by their experiences. With Mrs. Jenkins, however, we thought we discovered a source of the personal difficulties in her excessive dependence upon her husband and a feeling of being utterly lost after his death. With the Whites it seemed to be economic uncertainty combined with misguided philanthropy that contributed most to their undoing. In both cases it is easy to see the need not merely for definite financial provision in the event of industrial accident—e.g., compensation or insurance—but also for discriminating personal service of the sort we have come to call social case work.

#### NUMBER AND CHARACTER OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS <sup>2</sup>

*Number of Fatal and Non-Fatal Accidents Reported by the Several States to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 1917 to 1921*

	Fatal	Non-fatal
1917	11,338	1,363,080
1918	12,531	1,545,787
1919	10,806	1,365,520
1920	11,062	1,636,837
1921	9,394	1,382,871

It is well known that the data in the above table are far from complete. The systems of reporting in a number of states are quite inadequate and the workmen's compensation laws do not include all occupations. In 1921 the statistician for the United States Employees' Compensation Commission estimated the deaths from industrial accidents at 20,000 a year, the permanent partial disabilities at 100,000 and the temporary injuries at 2,500,000.<sup>3</sup> The Federated American Engineering Societies' Committee on Waste in Industry estimated that in 1919 there occurred

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. No. 339, p. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk., 1923: 76.

in American industries about 23,000 fatal accidents, 575,000 non-fatal accidents causing four weeks or more of disability and 3,000,000 causing at least one day's disability.<sup>4</sup> In order to have data that will be really helpful as a guide to prevention it is necessary to analyze these crude figures so that we may know how many employes were in each industrial group and something as to the length of time these workers were subject to the dangers of their calling. One method of computing rates which can be used for comparative purposes is to calculate what are known as the *hours of exposure*, that is, the total number of hours worked by all men under given conditions. *Frequency rates* are usually expressed in terms of the number of accidents for each one million hours' exposure of the working force. *Severity rates* are expressed as days lost per thousand hours' exposure. A recent report has stated the perils of various occupations in terms of the estimated annual fatalities for each one thousand three-hundred-day workers. These rates are as follows:

OCCUPATIONAL HAZARDS AS MEASURED BY ANNUAL  
FATALITY RATES PER ONE THOUSAND  
WORKERS IN 1923 <sup>5</sup>

Occupation	Rate
Electric light and power .....	5.73
Lumbermen, woodchoppers, etc. ....	5.00
Policemen, sheriffs, etc. ....	4.10
Coal mining .....	4.08
Transportation by water .....	4.00
Metal mining .....	3.66
Work about warehouses .....	2.84
Steam railroads .....	2.25
Road and street transportation .....	2.05
Oil and gas production .....	2.05

The nature and locations of the injuries which occurred to workmen in 12 states, in 1920, are indicated by the following tables.

<sup>4</sup> *Waste in Industry*, p. 22.

<sup>5</sup> *Survey*, 51: 409.



CLASSIFICATION OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS  
ACCORDING TO NATURE OF INJURY IN  
TWELVE STATES IN 1920 <sup>6</sup>

Nature of Injury	Number
Bruises .....	141,694
Cuts, lacerations, etc. ....	133,958
Sprains, dislocations .....	61,968
Fractures .....	42,045
Burns .....	26,006
Amputations .....	8,338
Asphyxiations .....	313
Unclassified .....	38,597
<hr/>	
Total .....	452,919

CLASSIFICATION OF INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS BY  
LOCATION OF INJURY, 1920 <sup>7</sup>

Location of Injury	Number
Upper extremities .....	188,940
Lower extremities .....	131,499
Trunk .....	69,813
Head, face and neck .....	34,106
Eyes .....	29,663
Unclassified .....	6,513
<hr/>	
Total .....	460,534

We deem it important to remind the reader again that the above data constitute a minimum statement. The actual totals can not be determined until we have uniform and more complete methods of reporting, but enough is already known to make it plain that we experience every year in the United States a tremendous human and economic loss on account of industrial accidents.

**The Economic Waste of Industrial Accidents.**—The following estimate of the financial losses due to industrial accidents was presented at the 1921 meeting of the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions.<sup>8</sup> This is based on essentially the same data

<sup>6</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. No. 339, p. 27.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. No. 304, pp. 59-61.

as those presented by the Committee of the Federated American Engineering Societies already referred to.<sup>9</sup> It was estimated on the basis of the "American Accident Table" that in 1919 temporary disabilities were responsible for a loss of 50,000,000 days and that permanent partial disabilities involved a loss of 8,000,000 potential working days, not counting the permanent loss of earning power. From the total of 58,000,000 days should be deducted 8,000,000 on account of Sundays and holidays. This would leave an actual loss of 50,000,000 working days. Permanent disabilities were estimated to involve a loss of a thousand days each. This meant for 1919 a total of 115,000,000 days, approximately, 7,000,000 of which have already been counted under the head of permanent partial disabilities. This leaves 108,000,000 days to be added to the 50,000,000 already enumerated. In addition we must take account of the 23,000 fatal accidents which were estimated to involve an average loss of 6,000 working days or a total of 138,000,000 working days. This brings the grand total to 296,000,000 working days lost because of industrial accidents in 1919. Taking the average wage at \$4.00 per day, this means a potential wage loss of \$1,184,000,000. However, if the 23,000 workmen who were killed had lived, they would have consumed presumably 60 per cent of their wages in living expenses. Hence there would be deducted \$331,000,000 on this account, leaving a net loss of \$853,000,000. But there are other items which have not been included, such as medical and surgical aid and hospital bills paid by the workers directly or through insurance. These were estimated to amount to \$161,000,000, making the final total \$1,014,000,000. Of this enormous amount it was estimated that \$349,000,000 of the loss was borne by employers and \$665,000,000 by employees. Of course money values cannot express the human loss, but they give us at least some hint of the tremendous cost of industrial accidents each year in the United States.

Epstein has assembled data<sup>10</sup> which indicate that this

<sup>9</sup> *Waste in Industry*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>10</sup> Epstein, A., *Facing Old Age*, pp. 33-4.



loss falls most heavily on workers whose wages are low and who have others dependent upon them. In Massachusetts 65 per cent of the non-fatal injuries in 1916-17, befell workers whose wages ranged from \$8.00 to \$15.00 a week. In California in 1918, 460 men who were killed in industrial accidents left 817 dependents, of whom 329 were wives whose average age was 38 years, and 455 were children whose average age was 8 years. In Pennsylvania a study of nearly 1,000,000 industrial accidents over a period of 5 years showed that 580,000 of the injured were married persons who had over 800,000 dependents.

If the accident is fatal, the injured workman is of course eliminated from the situation, but his family may suffer quite as greatly. His widow may be forced to go to work. His children, deprived of the care of one or both parents, suffer neglect in ways that we have previously discussed. They may themselves be forced prematurely into industry. The whole plane of living is likely to be lowered, the family's health and morale alike suffer and the home itself may have to be broken up.

**Personal Demoralization.**—All these things together tend to break the spirit of the worker and his family. The injury itself leads to a sense of helplessness and uselessness. The man's self-reliance is temporarily, and perhaps permanently, destroyed. Along with these may come a feeling of resentment and bitterness. Soon after the accident an insurance adjuster may come to him. This agent in many cases is tactless, unsympathetic and inclined to take advantage of the employe. The workman may be treated by a "company doctor" in whom he has little confidence. The distrust, discouragement and uncertainty unite with physical suffering to break the injured man's morale. Then if he is forced to remain idle for a long time he may lose the desire to resume work. He may get into a rut, adapt himself to a lower plane of living and lose his ambition and initiative. If he spends his idle time loafing about pool halls and soft-drink parlors, he may find cronies similarly situated. With them he will discuss his ailments, dwelling upon them and exaggerating them

in an unwholesome way. All in all, the seriously injured workman whose disability extends over a considerable period of time is fortunate indeed, if he does not experience mental and moral impairment as well as physical deterioration. The economic loss is serious, the loss of life and limb is appalling, but the loss of morale, if it can ever be measured, may be found the most disastrous of all.

Certainly this was true of Mr. White. His personal demoralization presented far more difficulties to the community than did his mere loss of sight and his poverty. Moreover, the break-down of morale seemed to extend to the entire family, Mrs. White and the oldest boy being most obviously affected. There was a similar, though less serious, disturbance of personal and family life organization in the case of the Jenkins family. Now in both of these instances the crisis was precipitated by an industrial accident, but the unadjustment involved also the lack of adequate legal and financial provision for such mishaps and the social tradition which justifies an attorney in keeping from one-third to one-half of the compensation money.

**Causes of Industrial Accidents.**—By this time it should be clear that causation is multiple. Presently we shall see that this statement is no less true of industrial accidents than of the other human situations which we have been studying. Here we find causes which may be attributed to the injured workman himself, to his fellow workers, his foreman, his employer, and those responsible for inspection. Or we might equally well state the whole thing in terms of impersonal mechanical causes such as poorly constructed machinery or belts, broken equipment, unguarded, dangerous machinery and various hazards which we have not yet learned how to control. For convenience we shall follow the first of these classifications, but in so doing we wish to make it clear that we are not attaching blame to individuals as such. We are simply indicating the point at which causation can be identified and dealt with.

Among the causes attributed to the injured workman are ignorance, extreme youth, physical weakness, heedlessness, inattention and rashness. Ignorance probably covers



a large share of these cases, including workers who are new at their jobs and foreigners who do not understand English. Extreme youth is decreasing as a factor as rapidly as child labor laws are adopted and enforced. Physical weakness involves such conditions as deafness, cardiac troubles and epilepsy. Heedlessness is illustrated by the case of a workman who sat down and leaned against a freight car; a switch engine came along, and when the cars bumped the man was killed. A sample of inattention is presented by the brakeman who was struck at night by an overhanging bridge about which the engineer had earlier warned him. Rashness is a word which may be applied to the machinist who throws on a belt without slowing down the shaft.

Causes attributed to fellow workmen are very similar to those we have just mentioned. In addition, they include such carelessness as failure to give warning with a whistle or bell and, in general, lack of cooperation. Causes attributed to foremen include cowardice, thoughtlessness, haste, non-enforcement of rules, mistakes and weariness. Some foremen will send men into places of danger where they would not go themselves. Some order or allow incompetent workers to undertake difficult and dangerous operations. Very frequently foremen themselves violate rules and regularly ignore violations by their workmen. At the same time it is only fair to remember that the foremen are human, that they themselves may be taxed beyond endurance by the tension of work, by noise and heat and weariness. They are constantly under pressure by the employer to increase output and at the same time want to avoid the criticism of their men, which is sure to come if they insist on exact obedience of all rules.

The causes attributed to employers include disregard for safety in the construction of plant and equipment, disregard for safety in organization of work, lack of careful inspection, hiring of careless or inefficient managers and foremen. Such factors as these are suggested by the breaking of scaffolding, collapse of a floor, a cracked grindstone, electric wires with the insulation worn off, couplers that

are out of order, saws, cogs, belting and emery wheels that are not guarded, machinery that is crowded into too small space, insufficient lighting, absence of signals or warnings of immediate danger.

In a given instance it is possible to view the accident from any one or all of the four angles indicated. But disputes as to who is to blame have been found quite futile. A man has been hurt, he needs medical attention and personal encouragement; his family needs money for groceries and rent. How can these best be provided? How can a recurrence of the mishap be prevented?

**Common Law Provisions.**—Under the provisions of the common law it was held to be the employer's duty to furnish a reasonably safe place to work, reasonably competent employes, and instructions when they were reasonably necessary, the test in all cases being ordinary usage. On the other side, the burden of proof in showing that the employer failed to fulfill any of these duties rested completely upon the employe. Moreover, the common law provided three or four defenses to which the employer might have recourse. The first of these was that the employe assumed the ordinary risks of the occupation in which he engaged. The second was that he assumed not only the usual inherent risks of the employment, but also any abnormal danger of which he was fully aware, but in spite of which he continued to work. A third defense was known as the fellow servant rule. According to this, the employer was not a guarantor to one employe against the negligence of other workers. It was held that any worker might reasonably anticipate that his associates would at times be careless and negligent, and that this was one of the natural risks of employment. The fourth defense was the doctrine of contributory negligence. According to this, an injured workman, in asking damages, must prove that he was in no wise responsible for the accident. Any negligence on his part, no matter how slight, would cause him to lose his suit, if without that negligence the accident would not have occurred.

It is easy to see that these provisions of the common law



operated almost entirely to the advantage of the employer and made it extremely difficult for the injured workman ever to win a suit for damages. The whole burden of proof was thrown upon him, but it was very difficult for the ordinary workman to secure competent legal counsel and to continue his case in the face of delays deliberately sought by the opposition. Hence, we can see why the common law provisions failed utterly to meet modern industrial conditions.

The significance of this inadequacy is not only legal and economic, but personal and social as well. The uncertainty of the whole matter, the frequent sense of injustice and the emphasis upon conflict (litigation) rather than upon adjustment (arbitration) could hardly fail to stimulate the development of attitudes of bitterness and hostility. These would usually be most acute among the injured themselves and their immediate families. But it would be bound to affect the whole working force and to promote a spirit of unrest.

**Employer's Liability.**—In the course of the nineteenth century a number of states enacted statutes which modified the provisions of the common law. Sometimes this new legislation deprived the employer of one or more of the defenses of the common law. In other cases they made him liable for injuries which occurred under certain specified conditions. This attempt to define the employer's liability more exactly worked somewhat to the advantage of the laboring people, but much less than was anticipated, because the whole matter was still left very largely to litigation. As a result injured workmen continued to receive very small and inadequate compensation. In a study of 235 fatal accidents in Pittsburg, in 1907,<sup>11</sup> it was found that the family received \$100.00 or less in 53 per cent of the cases. In only 30 per cent was the amount paid by the employer more than \$500.00, and in less than 10 per cent was the amount over \$1,000. This meant that, instead of helping to effect readjustments in the families of men

<sup>11</sup> Eastman, *Crystal, Work, Accidents and the Law*, p. 121.

killed in industry, these payments must often have constituted an aggravation and a source of further trouble.

The social philosophy underlying employer's liability laws as well as the common law, involved the notion that it was possible to fix upon particular persons a definite responsibility for every industrial accident. Prevention was therefore assumed to be most easily secured by imposing a penalty upon the guilty party. But numerous studies in all the industrial countries make it plain that it is not possible so to fix responsibility. On the contrary, a large proportion of the accidents must be regarded as occupational risks which are a legitimate charge against the industry and may properly be added to the cost of production. To that extent the cost should be borne by the consumer rather than by either the workman or his employers.

**Workmen's Compensation.**—The acceptance of these ideas has led to the gradual displacement of employer's liability by workmen's compensation acts. These have had as their purposes the securing of prompt medical aid, restoration of the workman to active service, provision for his family during the period of disability and, so far as possible, the prevention of litigation. Since 1911, 43 states and three territories have passed workmen's compensation laws of one sort or another. Most of these acts have been elective, that is, they have given the employer his choice of accepting the compensation act or of operating under the old liability law. But as an encouragement to choose the compensation plan, it was usually provided that employers who failed to do so should be deprived of the common law defenses mentioned above.

Compensation may include medical attendance, or a cash benefit or both. The importance of prompt and adequate medical attention is that it diminishes the number of serious and perhaps permanent complications, reduces the period of disability, represents a financial saving and lessens the chances of personal demoralization. Now it happens that most state laws impose a maximum limit of time or money or both upon the medical care to be included in the compensation. In order to guard against malingering



most laws provide for a waiting period of three to fourteen days in cases of total disability. The cash allowance, which is intended to take the place of lost wages, ranges in various states from one-half to two-thirds of the usual wage, providing the total does not exceed a stated amount and the payments do not continue beyond a specified period. It is quite certain that these narrow limits impose real hardships on many injured workmen and their families. For partial disability, compensation is fixed at certain arbitrary amounts or based on a certain number of weeks' benefit. In California, partial disability is defined as a proportion of the loss of earning power, which is calculated with reference to the age and occupation of the worker. In case of death the compensation also varies greatly. In only a few states does the law provide pensions for widows until their death or remarriage.

The administration of workmen's compensation laws ranges from practically none at all up to centralization in a single state department. In about three-fourths of the states there is a more or less adequately developed, staffed and financed state board which is responsible for administration of the act. The success of workmen's compensation, especially when combined with adequate provisions for accident insurance by the employer, is indicated by the fact that in a number of states the percentage of cases which involve litigation is almost infinitesimal. In addition to operating the machinery for determining whether or not compensation is due and if so in what amount, these state departments are also concerned with the personal adjustments which must be effected by injured workmen. The New York State Labor Department organized in 1920 what it calls its "After-Care Service." There are several social case workers employed by the department to study the worker's home conditions and environment, adjust various personal difficulties, tide the injured workman and his family over waiting periods, and in cooperation with public and private social agencies supplement the relief and services available under the Workmen's Compensation Act with whatever else may be needed. As yet this appears

to be a unique development, but it may be anticipated that other states will follow the lead of New York in putting the administration of workmen's compensation on a social case work basis.

A number of states also maintain, apart from the industrial accident commissions, bureaus for the rehabilitation of crippled and disabled persons. These are often valuable resources for those concerned with the effecting of new accommodations by and for injured workmen. Further discussion of them will, however, be deferred until Chapter XXIII.

**Industrial Accident Insurance.**—In order that there may be no doubt about the availability of funds from which to make compensation payments a number of states have imposed upon employers the requirement of carrying accident insurance for their workers. This insurance may be written by stock companies, mutual companies or by the state itself. A limited number of large employers are allowed to carry their own insurance. In 1922 there were sixteen states and six Canadian Provinces which were themselves offering insurance to employers. In some cases insurance with the state fund was compulsory. In others the state fund was in competition with the various private insurance agencies. A study made by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics<sup>12</sup> covering twenty states and two Canadian Provinces showed that the cost to the employers was greatest under private insurance. The Bureau estimated that it cost employers of the United States an extra \$30,000,000 a year to insure in stock and mutual companies. As to promptness of compensation payments the study yielded no conclusive results. The best five showings were made by the California State Fund, Idaho self-insurers, Oregon State fund, Michigan stock companies and Michigan self-insurers. As to the adequacy or liberality of compensation payments the state funds made the best showing. The private insurers often failed to make payments, offering flimsy excuses; not infrequently they were guilty of underpayments. But when it came to accident preven-

<sup>12</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. No. 301.



tion the private agencies were found to be more active and more effective than the state funds. As to security, the bureau reported that so far no injured workman had lost his compensation because of the insolvency of state insurance funds nor had any large mutual company become insolvent; but that, on the other hand, there had been several disastrous failures of private stock companies which resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars of unpaid claims. Considerable caution must have been exercised in granting corporations permission to carry their own insurance, for in fifteen states, from which reports were received, no self-insured employer had failed or gone into the hands of a receiver.

**Prevention of Industrial Accidents.**—We shall defer until a later chapter the further discussion of treatment of injured workmen. Here we shall confine ourselves to examining the possibility and methods of prevention. The Federated Engineering Societies' Committee on Waste in Industry reported that 75 per cent of the losses from industrial accidents could be prevented by measures known and in use by more careful employers and workmen. The California Industrial Accident Commission made a study of 400 cases of death; its engineers reported that 81 per cent of these were humanly preventable.

Two types of agencies that have played an important role in the reduction of accidents and stimulation of interest in safety are state departments of labor and insurance companies that write industrial accident policies. Both work through inspection and education. Their success seems to be in proportion to the thoroughness and frequency of inspection and to the time spent in correcting dangerous machinery and work habits. It is vital, therefore, that the inspectors be thoroughly familiar with industrial processes and organization, keenly alert to discover defects, tactful and yet vigorous in bringing them effectively to the attention of both managers and workmen. The spoils system of American politics has played havoc with more than one state industrial department, and this is undoubtedly one reason why the insurance companies

have provided relatively so large a part of the impetus toward prevention. Of course, another reason lies in their power to adjust premium rates to the hazards of a given plant or industry.

Much cooperative effort has been spent on the development of plans for safety organization in industrial establishments. The Committee on Waste in Industry of the Federated American Engineering Societies presented in its report a detailed scheme adapted to the needs of both large and small plants.<sup>13</sup> Safety codes are constantly being worked out under the auspices of the American Engineering Standards Committee<sup>14</sup> and the Safety Code Correlating Committee.<sup>15</sup> Still another preventing agency is the National Safety Council.

**Some Results of Preventive Work.**—The following interesting figures are from a Michigan factory and illustrate the possible achievements of a safety department.

#### ACCIDENT PREVENTION IN A MICHIGAN FACTORY<sup>16</sup>

	Jan. 1917	Apr. 1920
Total employees .....	12,707	22,276
Total accidents .....	1,156	1,121
Lost-time accidents .....	99	92
Accidents per 1,000 employes .....	90.9	50.5
Lost-time accidents per 1,000 employes	7.8	4.1

In a plant manufacturing aluminum canteens for the War Department, each half of the canteen was formed on a stamping press. Several operators lost one or more fingers at this work. A state inspector calling to investigate, found that these accidents occurred when the operator reached in to free a piece which had stuck in the die. As a remedy he suggested a foot-operated kick-out. The War Department representative protested against this change on the ground that the canteens were urgently needed and their production must not be interrupted. Finally the press was shut down and the kick-out installed. To the surprise of every one, within a couple of days the output of canteens had caught up with production schedule and thereafter

<sup>13</sup> *Waste in Industry*, pp. 338-340.

<sup>14</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. 281, p. 21.

<sup>15</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. 333, p. 231.

<sup>16</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 126, p. 55.



the daily production was approximately doubled as a result of installing the kick-out.<sup>17</sup>

Such instances as these indicate that the mechanical and economic problems involved in accident prevention have already been solved to a considerable extent. It is the personal and social problems which are hardest to work out. In other words, why don't we utilize the technical knowledge which is available? The answer to this question requires an analysis of the individual and social attitudes of workers and their employers. No adequate study of these has yet been made, but they seem to be bound up with the inertia of custom and the American traditions of individualism and recklessness.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write an account of an industrial accident that has occurred recently in your home district. Note possible causes, consequences, treatment of the injured worker and compensation.
2. Secure data concerning the number and character of industrial accidents in your home district and state during a recent year. Calculate the frequency and severity rates as described in this chapter. Compare these with the rates in other districts and states.
3. Study the laws of your state which pertain to industrial accidents. Secure reports of the state department charged with their enforcement and administration. Compare these with the laws and the administrative machinery of other states.
4. Learn what is being done by employers, insurance companies, and state departments to reduce accidents and promote safety in your home district.
5. Read the court records of cases involving industrial accidents.
6. Collect data from personal interviews, newspaper clippings, etc., which indicate the attitudes of workers, employers and insurance companies toward industrial accidents and compensation. Note especially whether these are regarded as occasions for conflict or as difficulties to be adjusted.

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## CHAPTER XIX

### DISASTERS

#### THE CHERRY MINE DISASTER<sup>1</sup>

In northern Illinois is a little coal mining town called Cherry. Its appearance in 1909 was described by the National Director of the American Red Cross as "a grimy, dirty, unkempt community." He went on to say, "It lacks water and lights and drainage. Sidewalks are mostly cinder paths. The streets are black prairie soil which becomes dust in summer and mud in winter." The population of 1,500 was made up mostly of young and vigorous people, many of whom were recent immigrants. Italians and Slavs predominated, but there were also Germans, Belgians, French, English and Scotch. While they were in the main hard-working, industrious folk, their spending habits are suggested by the presence of 17 saloons, each paying an annual license fee of \$500.

On Saturday afternoon, November 13, 1909, the mine caught fire from a load of hay that came in contact with a torch. The flames spread rapidly through the two shafts, cutting off a large number of miners from all possibility of escape. Immediately those who were above ground assembled for the dangerous work of rescue. Without hesitation miners and inspectors went down in the face of almost certain death to do the little that might be possible for those trapped below. Ten of these rescue volunteers were killed by the terrific heat in the shaft. Above the

<sup>1</sup> Data assembled from several sources including: Deacon, J. Bryon, *Disasters*, pp. 44-67; Boardman, Mabel T., *Under the Red Cross Flag*, pp. 145-6; Taylor, Graham, *A Mine Test of Civilization*, Survey, 23: 297-304.



mouth of the mine waited wives and children in dumb agony.

"The alternations of despair and hope seemed all the more cruel for being so prolonged and so intensely dramatic. The sealing of both shafts on Monday immediately followed the first safe descent into the shaft since the ten heroes who went down to rescue came up in the cage dead. . . . The waiting women and children were told by the sheriff's deputies to be patient and calm, as they would soon know all. But no sooner had this word passed along the line than the fire burst into flames again, as the fan sent air down to the rescuers and the miners at the bottom. When the heavy planks were thrown over the mouth of each shaft, and railway rails were placed on top of them to hold them down, and tons of sand were piled over all to shut off all draft, it seemed like shutting off every breath of air from the gasping men at the bottom who might still be alive, and like sealing living men in the tomb of the dead. The women who had been watching stolidly for hours, watching the mouth of the shaft, burst into tears, buried their faces in their hands, and with their awe-stricken little children clinging to them, either bowed to the ground or wandered aimlessly about the prairie.

"Again, after the wisest heads and the stoutest hearts had been hopeless during the days while the sealing of the mine smothered the flames, the government rescuers reported the discovery of living men, who under the lead of experienced Scotch miners, had walled themselves in from fire and gas. Then came the terrible alternations of joy and sorrow, hope and despair, as the cage went down with relays of rescuers and came up with its grewsome burden of the dead or the nearly starved and smothered survivors who had been entombed a whole week. The fact that more bodies were not found and that over a score of living men were brought to the surface only increased the strain of suspense and the heartrending conflict between hope and despair. For what woman could save herself from the distracting question, 'Is my "man" coming up next time, or is he "down" among the dead at the bottom?'

But when the almost unrecognizable bodies were brought up, one by one, and laid in a row in the open field, the iron entered the very soul, as all who had not yet recovered their lost ones were compelled to file by to try to identify their own.

"This cruelest uncertainty continued to the very end, when on the twelfth day after the fire all hope of finding another man alive was abandoned and both shafts of the mine were sealed again to smother the persistent fire."<sup>2</sup>

In the end 256 miners lost their lives—one-half the men of the town. One hundred and eighty-eight left families that consisted of 170 women and 469 children. Only 24 of the children were over 16 years old, while 227 were under five.

Within twenty-four hours of the disaster there was organized the Cherry Relief Committee, whose members included the mayor, the manager of the coal company, three members of the United Mine Workers of Illinois, National Director of the Red Cross and the Superintendent of the Chicago United Charities. This committee undertook to handle the donations sent in and to organize the work of caring for the families of the entombed miners. There were other groups from outside Cherry which preferred to work independently and which seemed to have a "simple, abiding faith in the efficacy of cash and food and clothes to meet all human needs whatsoever." One of these committees came in from a neighboring town with a supply of clothing which it distributed from street corners to all who passed. "A few days before Christmas, another committee came bearing sleds which were given to the boys who were lucky enough to be on hand when the distribution took place. Afterward, one lad who had been given a sled was heard to complain bitterly because he had received but one, while a companion had received seven, and was doing a driving trade selling his surplus stock to the boys who had received none."<sup>3</sup>

The United Mine Workers, to which organization all

<sup>2</sup> Taylor, Graham in Survey, 23: 300.

<sup>3</sup> Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 48.



of the men belonged, paid a death benefit of \$150 to each bereaved family. The coal company paid funeral expenses, allowed the family to occupy company houses rent free and provided free fuel. Later, although there was at the time no workmen's compensation law in Illinois, the company paid to most of the families the equivalent of three years' wages of the lost breadwinner. The state appropriated \$100,000 for relief, the United Mine Workers raised \$70,000, and another \$100,000 came from several different sources. This money was administered by a commission which served without pay, but which employed three social workers.

"The policy of the Cherry Relief Commission was not one of indemnifying the families for the loss of wage-earners, but of equipping them to lead healthy, happy, useful, normal lives in spite of their misfortunes." This meant more than emergency aid; it meant more than material relief no matter how long continued. It meant such personal service as "arousing the afflicted members from their stunning sorrow and heartening them to face life courageously; helping the widows to plan thoughtfully and wisely for the future; providing industrial training which will fit them to contribute to family income; advising them in the expenditure of death benefit, settlement, and insurance funds, which are likely to be much larger than they have been accustomed to handle; affording protection against predatory and unscrupulous lawyers and agents; giving experienced counsel regarding the discipline and education of children; and where removal to other communities is necessary, as frequently happens, assisting the family to establish its new home amid wholesome surroundings and putting its members in touch with helpful influences and agencies." <sup>4</sup>

For two weeks after the disaster school was closed. Children "running wild" or congregating at the mouth of the mine presented a serious problem. To meet this situation an experienced playground director was secured from Chicago. Ball games in the school yard and story

<sup>4</sup> Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 65.

hour inside helped to lure the boys and girls back to school. The day finally set for unsealing the mine was selected for the organization of an athletic association and for a girls' party.

#### THE HALIFAX DISASTER <sup>5</sup>

On the morning of December 6, 1917, a French steamship laden with trinitrotoluol, that most powerful of known explosives, was headed toward anchorage in Halifax harbor, when suddenly an empty Belgian relief ship passed directly in her pathway. The vessels collided and as a consequence there presently lay dead 2,000; the injured numbered 6,000 and the homeless 10,000. Three hundred acres were left a smoking waste, and \$35,000,000 worth of property was destroyed.

The catastrophe combined the features of earthquake, flood, fire, tornado, air raid and blizzard. The city was rocked by the violence of the explosion; a veritable tidal wave swept toward the land; a series of fires broke out; the tornado-like blast from the ship rained iron fragments upon the city. Then followed rain, snow and zero weather.

"There was the disintegration of the home and the family—the reproductive system of society—its members sundered and helpless to avert it. There was the disintegration of the regulative system—government was in perplexity, and streets were without patrol. There was the disintegration of the sustaining system—a dislocation of transportation, a disorganization of business while the wheels of industry ceased in their turning. There was a derangement of the distributive system—of all the usual services, of illumination, water-connections, telephones, deliveries. It was impossible to communicate with the outside world. There were no cars, no mails, no wires. There was a time when the city ceased to be a city, its citizens a mass of unorganized units—struggling for safety, shelter, covering and bread." <sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Data assembled from several sources, the most important being Prince, S. H., *Catastrophe and Social Change*.

<sup>6</sup> Prince, *op. cit.*, p. 31.



At first the people were stunned and dazed, paralyzed with a sense of utter helplessness. All was confusion. "Some ran to the cellars. Some ran to the streets. Some ran to their shops. Those in the shops ran home." Then came word that a second explosion was imminent; the fires were approaching the powder magazine of the Navy Yard.

"The crowd needed no second warning. They turned and fled. Hammers, shovels and bandages were thrown aside. Stores were left wide open with piles of currency on their counters. Homes were vacated in a twinkling. Little tots couldn't understand why they were being dragged along so fast. Some folks never looked back. Others did, either to catch a last glimpse of the home they never expected to see again or to tell if they could from the sky how far behind them the Dreaded Thing was. . . . They fled as they were. . . . Some carried children or bundles of such things as they had scrambled together. . . . Many were but scantily clad. Women fled in their night dresses. A few were stark naked, their bodies blackened with soot and grime. These had come from the destroyed section of the North End. What a storm-tossed motley throng, and as varied in its aspects and as poignant in its sufferings as any band of Belgian or Serbian refugees fleeing before the Hun. . . . A few rode in autos, but the great majority were on foot. With blanched faces, bleeding bodies and broken hearts, they fled from the Spectral Death they thought was coming hard after, fled to the open spaces where possibly its shadow might not fall. Soon Citadel Hill and the Common were black with terrified thousands. Thousands more trudged along St. Margaret's Bay road, seeking escape among its trees and winding curves. . . . Many cut down boughs and made themselves fires—for they were bitterly cold. Here they were—poorly clad, badly wounded, and with not one loaf of bread in all their number, so hastily did they leave, when galloping horsemen announced the danger was over and it was safe to return." 7

All sorts of rumors were abroad. In their hallucinations

7 Prince, *op. cit.*, pp. 42-43.

many "saw" the approach of a German fleet and "heard" the scream of shells overhead. Nerves were tense to the breaking point. Some were driven even to suicide. Many bore the first strain with amazing endurance and fortitude, but "lived on edge" long afterward. Others broke down while picturing over and over again the dreadful scenes. Babies were born prematurely amid the ruins.

Great contrasts appeared in the conduct of men and women. On the one hand were looting and profiteering. "Men clambered over the bodies of the dead to get beer in the shattered breweries. . . . Then there were the nightly prowlers among the ruins, who rifled the pockets of the dead and dying, and snatched rings from icy fingers. . . . Landlords raised their rents upon people in no position to bear it. . . . Plumbers refused to hold their union rules in abeyance and to work one minute beyond the regular eight hours unless they received their extra rates for overtime. . . . Truckmen charged exorbitant prices for the transferring of goods and baggage. Merchants boosted prices. A small shopkeeper asked a little starving child thirty cents for a loaf of bread."<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, there were countless instances of unusual service to others. A chauffeur with a broken rib made trip after trip, taking the wounded to a hospital, stopping only when he collapsed. A member of the telephone staff stuck to his post for ninety-two hours. A young physician performed eye operations for hours without interruption. A wounded girl rescued a large family of children from a burning house. An entire battery volunteered to flood the powder magazine in order to prevent a second explosion. Cafés served lunches without charge. Drug stores gave freely of their supplies.

Soldiers, firemen and actors were among the first to respond in any organized fashion. The army had organization, discipline and resources in the way of needed supplies. The firemen, even when a second explosion was expected, stuck to their posts. A stock company organized the first relief station about noon on the day of the disaster. By

<sup>8</sup> Prince, *op. cit.*, pp. 50-51.



mid-afternoon there was a semblance of cooperative effort in the rescue work.

The refugees were gathered into tents erected by the military or into churches and such other large buildings as remained standing. At first they were herded together indiscriminately. "Rich and poor, debutante and chamber-maid, official and bell-boy met for the first time as victims of a common calamity." Men, women and children lay side by side in the large sleeping rooms and "shared each other's woes." Then followed requests for changes of location in the dormitories and of places at the tables. There was a fairly rapid and spontaneous segregation according to natural affiliations of kinship, friendship, religion and even politics.

As soon as word could be got to the outside world, relief units and supplies were started for Halifax. A large and effectively organized group of social workers came from Boston. They were known to the Canadians as the American Unit; they were sent by the Public Safety Committee of Massachusetts and the Boston Chapter of the American Red Cross. In prompt consultation with the local Citizens' Relief Committee they devised a plan which involved: (1) centralization of authority and administration into one official relief organization, (2) cooperation among all of the agencies at work (this was not wholly successful, the Salvation Army and the clergy of various faiths holding off the longest), (3) education of the public in the principles of disaster relief, that all might take their part and might understand the reasons for systematic effort, (4) the changing of emergency relief as rapidly as possible into permanent rehabilitation.

There were four major divisions of the work: (1) general rehabilitation, (2) medical social service, (3) children's work, (4) provision for the blind. The last was made necessary by the fact that nearly seven hundred were blinded by bits of glass and other flying fragments. The first represented the work of family restoration which is a vital part of the task which follows almost every disaster. The second and third were developed to an unusual degree

at Halifax not only because of the obvious needs, but because these phases of social work are more completely differentiated in Boston than in most cities.

The medical social service included arranging for clothing and shelter prior to discharge from hospital; correlation of the medical and surgical work with that of committees on children, blind and general rehabilitation; making a census of the handicapped; placing responsibility for follow-up and after-care; intensive case work where there were both social and medical needs.

The work of the children's committee included hunting for "missing" children and identifying "unclaimed" children; making investigations to see that children were receiving proper care and were in proper custody; getting repairs made to existing children's institutions; arranging for temporary and permanent placement in homes; recovering children taken charge of by unsuitable persons.

Prince's account of the Halifax disaster is of especial interest to us, because it not only gives a vivid picture of the catastrophe itself and of the relief work which followed, but also the story of changes in the life of the community. Some of the more immediately observed changes were the introduction of women conductors on street cars, a new attitude toward Sabbath observance and the readjustment of membership in parishes, schools and other social groups.

But there were other and more permanent changes. Halifax, which had been relatively immobile, conservative and complacent, began to show signs of a new life. Among the most obvious were attractive store fronts and show-rooms, new sidewalks, and pavements, bungalows in the place of old square houses, new street cars, increased building, rise in the prices of real estate, increased bank clearings, postal revenue and tramway receipts, coming of new, large business interests, increased population. Less obvious, but perhaps of more importance, were increase in the number and percentage of voters who exercised the privilege of casting their ballots, marked activity on the part of a previously slow-moving Town-Planning Board,



appointment of a Housing Committee, development of a new public health program, expansion and "socialization" of the educational system, promotion of public recreation, and a general spirit of team-work. All these were symbols of community reorganization and regeneration which, if not due to the disaster, were at least greatly stimulated by it.

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The Cherry and Halifax disasters have been selected for presentation here because they represent two major types into which such catastrophes may be classified, those which primarily take the lives of breadwinners and those which destroy property and life throughout a community. The number of fires, floods, tornadoes, shipwrecks, mine explosions, earthquakes, riots and epidemics which bring death and destruction swiftly to unsuspecting communities is little realized by the average person.<sup>9</sup> In 1917 alone there were brought to the attention of the American Red Cross no less than 80 such disasters in which 1,750 persons lost their lives, 6,000 were injured and property losses amounted to \$110,000,000.<sup>10</sup>

**Types of Disasters.**—As suggested above, disasters may be roughly grouped under two main heads, (1) those which involve loss of life and personal injury, especially to breadwinners, (2) those which involve destruction of property, and frequently of life as well. Under the first head might be classed (*a*) shipwrecks, as of the *Titanic* in 1912 or the *Eastland* in 1915, (*b*) coal mine fires or explosions, like the Cherry disaster described above, (*c*) factory fires, like that of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York in 1911, (*d*) epidemics, like that of the influenza in 1918. In the second class might be counted (*a*) tornadoes, as at Omaha in 1913, (*b*) floods, as in the Ohio River Valley in 1913 or at Galveston in 1900, (*c*) explosions, as of Halifax, (*d*) city-wide fires, like those of Chicago in 1871, Balti-

<sup>9</sup> An interesting, though by no means complete, list may be found in the *World Almanac*, 1924: 680-687.

<sup>10</sup> *Manual of Disaster Relief*, A. R. C. 209, p. 6.

more in 1904, Salem, Massachusetts, in 1914, (e) forest fires, like those in Minnesota in 1908, 1910 and 1918, (f) earthquakes, as at Valparaiso, Chile, in 1905, and San Francisco in 1906, (g) volcanic eruptions, as of Mt. Pelée in 1902, (h) riots, as in Tulsa in 1921. War, the greatest of all catastrophes, might be classified here, but it is so much more extensive as to territory covered and persons involved that it deserves a separate category.

While it is convenient to classify the many sorts of disasters, we should not forget that each one has unique characteristics, which call for a program of action differing, sometimes slightly and sometimes very greatly, from those which meet the needs in other situations. Disasters at sea usually mean loss of life, the victims being most frequently breadwinners, but oft-times home-makers and children as well. Then there is the destruction of goods in transit, personal effects and money carried on the person. Those who escape from the ill-fated ship may suffer from exposure and shock. Families may be separated through the picking up of survivors by different rescuers. To the folks at home these calamities mean just the sort of experiences we have been discussing throughout the book, whether under the head of family disorganization or of economic difficulty.

Floods commonly wreck houses and places of business, or wash them away, or fill them with mud and wreckage. Floods interrupt transportation and communication, cut off lights, gas and water, break open sewers, strew the landscape with dead animals, ruin crops. To people living in the path of the waters they bring death, exposure, sickness and discouragement. They disrupt the orderly processes of government and frequently require the assistance of the military, if not the declaration of martial law.

Forest fires come usually in the autumn, destroying not only timber, but farms, villages and towns as well. Sweeping all before them, they bring financial ruin and often death. With harvested crops destroyed, homes in ashes and winter approaching, they call for prompt and extended relief. In contrast, a fire in a factory takes a greater toll of lives than of property. It means a stoppage of income,



widowhood and orphanage, but not immediate want of shelter, food and personal effects. Still a different situation is created by city-wide fires with their wholesale destruction of all sorts of property, disorganization of business, dislocation of transportation, unemployment. These present problems of establishing law and order, and providing immediate food and shelter, sanitation, means of transportation and communication, business and employment. After a tornado there are the pressing tasks of removing the injured from the wreckage, caring for the wounded, sheltering and feeding refugees, burying the dead and salvaging goods from the ruins. Sanitation is also apt to present important problems, because of the breaking of sewers and contamination of the water supply. Thus amid all their differences the various types of disasters present a similar set of problems. "Disaster causes a sudden and violent rupture of the normal life of families or of communities, through death, injury, disease, or the destruction of dwellings, furniture, business places and tools and equipment." <sup>11</sup>

**The Aftermath of Disasters.**—Some of the more obvious effects of great catastrophes have been indicated in our sketch of types. We may now classify these consequences and call attention to some which do not appear quite so plainly to the casual observer. The after-effects of disasters may be classified as follows: (1) economic—property loss, disorganization of commerce and industry; (2) physiological—personal injury and loss of life; (3) psychological—modifications of individual behavior; and (4) sociological—disorganization of social groups and institutions, changed attitudes, etc.

The property losses in such disasters as we have described are estimated to have amounted to more than one billion dollars between 1900 and 1919.<sup>12</sup> The property destroyed ranged all the way from clothing and other personal effects to great commercial and industrial establishments on which large numbers depended for the means

<sup>11</sup> *Manual of Disaster Relief*, A. R. C. 209, p. 6.

<sup>12</sup> *Manual of Disaster Relief*, p. 6.

of making a living. Fires, floods, tornadoes and earthquakes not only destroy property, but also disrupt means of communication and the service of public utilities. Stores, banks and offices, if not actually destroyed, are likely to be closed because of threatened overflow, fire or lawlessness. Employes find it difficult, if not out of the question, to reach places of business. Factories and other industrial establishments are similarly forced to cease operation. In the general confusion, business and industry may be completely disorganized.

How many hundreds of thousands of persons have been killed and injured in catastrophes of recent years no one can tell. It is possible that the total would run above a million.<sup>13</sup> But besides those who are the immediate and direct victims of the disasters, there are countless others who suffer from exposure and the onset of diseases which might otherwise have been prevented. Tuberculosis, diabetes and hyperthyroidism were said to have been precipitated in considerable numbers of people by the Halifax disaster. Premature births commonly occur; and to all the usual disaster hazards are added the lack of proper medical facilities, shock, exposure and worry. As to endurance of pain and fatigue there is evidence at first of the tapping of unknown "reservoirs" of power followed later by collapse and even death. At Halifax "sidewalk operations, the use of common thread for sutures, the cold-blooded extracting of eyes were carried on often without a tremor."<sup>14</sup> "Weeks later the workers were surprised to find themselves aged and thin."

The psychological effects are much harder to measure, but no less real. In the account of the Halifax disaster we noted the presence of hallucinations and delusions amid the excitement and confusion which followed the explosion. At Cherry there was a prolonged period of alternating hope and despair. The emotional tension was sometimes greater than human beings could bear. "Now and again some overwrought watcher at the shaft would 'burst the

<sup>13</sup> World Almanac, 1924: 680-687.

<sup>14</sup> Prince, *op. cit.*, p. 54.



bonds of frozen grief and shriek out her fears in wild, formless cries.' ''<sup>15</sup> Long after the physical event was past individuals found it impossible to escape the mental pictures of the horrible scenes they had witnessed. There is often an extended period of high suggestibility and readiness to respond to any rumor of danger.

But in time of disaster, as at other times, people act not merely as individuals; they act as members of social groups. The whole experience is rendered more vivid by being shared with others. It is thereby at once more terrible and easier to bear. The terrors of the panic-stricken flight from a doomed city, ship or mine are the greater because of the general stampede. But the rendering of service to others whose injury or loss is greater than one's own distracts the attention in a wholesome way. We have noted the paradox of profiteering mingled with generosity, and of looting with the most unselfish service. These are symbols of broken morale and of general social disintegration. The herding together of rich and poor, black and white, native and foreign, Catholic and Protestant is a breaking down of social distance, followed later by a readjustment of membership in groups. The functioning of various institutions is checked and the membership of groups scattered. Thus the city government may be paralyzed and troops have to be called for the maintenance of order, church buildings may be destroyed and their parishes wiped out, schools may be wrecked and the pupils scattered. The disruption of means of communication adds to the breakdown of the entire social organization.

These are some of the immediate results of the catastrophe. But after a time other and perhaps constructive tendencies appear. The organization for relief is a first step toward a general social reorganization. As at Halifax, we may find an awakening to the need of new legislation, strengthening of governmental agencies, union of churches, expansion of educational and recreational systems, the growth of a spirit of cooperation. Even out of the most terrible disaster may come new attitudes and a realignment

<sup>15</sup> Deacon, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

of social forces which will make for a better organized community working more effectively toward the solution of its various problems.

**Disaster Relief.**—While every disaster is different from every other, there are certain aspects of the procedure both at Cherry and at Halifax which are fairly typical of relief organization and methods in many places. At the outset there is usually a spontaneous and unorganized attempt by various individuals and groups to do what first comes to hand. They get in each other's way, go over the same ground and overlook vital needs. Hence there is presently assembled, perhaps under the auspices of a mayor or governor, a more or less representative committee to correlate the various efforts and to handle incoming offers of service and supplies. But not many local communities are prepared to meet such a crisis alone; help from the outside is needed and usually welcomed. This may come from the military forces, from nearby communities, or from the American Red Cross. This last named organization is more adequately prepared to serve the people of stricken areas than any other agency. Indeed, one of its chief responsibilities is the rendering of aid under just such circumstances.

As rapidly as possible the work of relief is carried forward through the following stages: (1) emergency period in which there may be street corner "hand-outs," presently displaced by relief stations, the gathering of refugees into tent colonies or other temporary shelter, and in general the meeting of common elemental needs of masses of people; (2) a transition period in which relief stations give way to orders upon local merchants, people return to their former home sites or seek new ones, factories open, organs of transportation and communication begin to function "normally," government and other agencies of social control start to play their usual rôles; (3) a period of rehabilitation in which the effort is made to fit every individual and family into a well-knit social order, providing "permanent" and adequate material resources, and in general affording opportunity for wholesome, well-balanced lives.



The principles that govern the more effective schemes of disaster relief cannot be presented here in any detail. We can only call attention to a few that seem to us among the more important. First of all, it is wise to notify outside agencies, especially the Red Cross and the state government, as promptly as possible. As rapidly as it can be done, all the participating agencies should be fused or coordinated in order to avoid "overlapping and overlooking," wasted effort and loss of precious time. Relief funds are more carefully administered if they pass through the hands of one responsible group. Initial organization is most useful if it is on a frankly temporary basis, ready to give way to a more effective organization when those who are experienced in disaster relief arrive. Mass treatment, which is often necessary at the outset, is pretty sure to be demoralizing if allowed to continue any longer than necessary. It has been found best to give relief on a temporary basis until all claimants are registered, their needs studied and the aggregate of available resources clearly understood. The most effective work seems to require a considerable amount of record-keeping and other "red tape." In order to make this "system" serve its real purpose and not become an end in itself, it is wise to keep it as much in the background as possible. It is also quite essential that every effort be made to acquaint people with the reasons for its use, that they may understand and co-operate.

It should not be forgotten that the victims of a disaster need not merely food, clothes, shelter and money, but "wise personal counsel and guidance" as well. They often require help in the protection of health, settlement of legal disputes, securing new jobs, improvement in methods of housekeeping, and in overcoming apathy and despair. Many of these needs will not be the results of the catastrophe in any sense at all. They were there before; the disaster only made them apparent or opened the way for rendering long-needed services.

**Preparedness for Disasters.**—Some disasters can undoubtedly be averted entirely—certain types of fires

through "fire-proof" construction, certain floods by building levees and sea-walls, certain explosions by control of the manufacture and handling of explosives, certain riots by proper policing and the cultivation of inter-racial goodwill. But tornadoes, many fires, floods, shipwrecks and other catastrophes will be for some time, perhaps always, beyond the control of man. Moreover, since it is quite impossible to know where the next disaster will occur, it is important that there be both local and regional preparation to respond with the least possible delay and the greatest possible effectiveness when the trouble may come. The Red Cross has outlined in its *Manual of Disaster Relief*<sup>16</sup> a plan whereby every local community may mobilize its personnel and material resources, either in its own emergency or upon call to other places. This plan proposes that the local Red Cross Chapter assume the responsibility by providing a disaster preparedness committee, making a survey of relief resources such as food, medical equipment, temporary shelter, etc., making and annually reviewing a plan for mobilization, noting danger spots such as lowlands, mines, powder mills, etc., and formulating special plans for meeting emergencies which might arise there. The scheme also involves the creation of a medical service unit and a social service unit. The former would be composed of physicians, surgeons and nurses; the latter of experienced social workers. The Chapter is also to maintain an emergency closet with those supplies apt to be needed most urgently. The national offices of the Red Cross have been organized to respond promptly to calls from any part of the country. They have persons detailed to this service and others who can be shifted from their regular work. They have supplies stored at various points all ready to ship to the scene of a disaster.

Almost, if not quite, as important as the preparedness for disaster relief is the provision against loss through insurance of one kind and another. Industrial accident insurance and the death benefits paid by trade unions are examples, but they are almost never adequate to cover the

<sup>16</sup> Revised in 1924 under the title, *When Disaster Strikes*.



losses of a general disaster. Even the ordinary life, accident, fire and tornado insurance do not often meet the needs. Indeed, unless the insurance carrier be a large body with extensive resources, it may be unable to meet its ordinary obligations to the victims of a catastrophe. Prince has suggested the wisdom of special "catastrophe insurance" administered by the Federal government, or perhaps by some international body, in order to secure the widest possible distribution of risk. This would, of course, depend on still other changes in social organization, especially as it involves the relations of "sovereign" states. If public sentiment be once aroused to the need, there appears no inherent reason why such a scheme might not be brought into being.

But just here lies our greatest difficulty. How is public sentiment to be aroused? With reference to disasters we are all very much like the (alleged) Arkansas farmer whose roof leaked. When it rained he couldn't fix it, and when the rain stopped he didn't need to. The problem is one of translating knowledge into action. It is a task not merely of spreading information, but of modifying social attitudes and customary modes of behavior. It means that somehow there must be generated enthusiasm for disaster preparedness, if the carefully thought-out plans of social workers are to be made really effective.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. From periodical and other literature assemble data and write the story of one or more disasters.
2. Discover what preparations, if any, have been made in your home district for dealing with disasters.
3. Acquaint yourself with outside sources of disaster relief on which your local community may call.
4. If there is no disaster preparedness plan for your city or county, draw one up, after studying the Red Cross Manual of Disaster Relief, and present it to the class for discussion.
5. Study Federal and State laws and municipal ordinances pertaining to flood control, safety on steamships, safety in mines, fire prevention, urban and forest.
6. Find what part of the losses in some disaster was covered

by insurance. Were any companies unable to pay the indemnities provided in their policies?

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**Part III**

**HEALTH ASPECTS  
OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION AND  
PERSONAL DEMORALIZATION**





## CHAPTER XX

### BROKEN HEALTH

Throughout this book we are dealing with the problems of people out of adjustment with their social environment, people cut off in various ways from the associations which are essential to a wholesome personality. Most fundamental among these social relations are those between members of a family. Hence we first considered a variety of unadjustments from the standpoint of family disorganization. Outside of our primary groups, of which the family is the most important, our most vital relationships are probably those which have to do with making a living. Hence our second set of problems dealt with economic aspects of group disorganization and personal demoralization. We turn now to a third angle of approach, that of health. In the discussions that have gone before we have observed again and again ways in which loss of physical health may disturb one's relations to other people and his personal life organization. Mr. White's blindness led not only to poverty, but to juvenile delinquency as well. Fatigue was an outstanding factor in the breakup of the Nyack family. Influenza combined with seasonal employment to menace the integrity of the Allen family. The Lees were in dire need not merely because of their advanced age, but even more because of the extended illnesses that consumed their savings. And so with numerous others, health was intimately bound up with economic success, family life, and personal development.

#### MARY LUCCA AND HER MALNOURISHED BABY <sup>1</sup>

*Tony* first came to the notice of a group of social workers in a large city hospital when one of the doctors in charge

<sup>1</sup> This summary was prepared by a case worker in the Social Service Department of a large hospital.

of a children's ward referred this two-months-old baby with the statement that he was suffering from jaundice and malnutrition; that he was moreover the illegitimate offspring of an apparently feeble-minded woman and would therefore probably not receive suitable home care.

Obviously the situation presents two problems, that of the feeble-minded mother, and that of the malnourished child, but we are for present purposes primarily interested in the child. Consequently we shall not go into the mother's case any further than is necessary to get an understanding of the situation as it affects the child.

The family consisted of:

*Mary*, the mother, who was an Italian-born woman thirty years of age, who came to America at the age of six, and attended school until she was thirteen. At the time she left school to go to work she was in the sixth grade of the Parochial School. She continued to live with her parents, working irregularly in a tailor's shop until her first child was born. Though feeble-minded, she appeared rather attractive and exhibited a certain amount of shrewdness. She also had shown some capacity as a housekeeper; but she was not a good manager.

*Giovanni*, an illegitimate half-brother, five years of age, apparently normal physically and mentally, living at home with his mother and attending kindergarten.

*Other relatives* were the maternal grandparents, aged 70 and 68, Italian-born, living in the same city; and a maternal uncle by the name of Tito who was married and had three children.

A little of the mother's history must be given in order to understand the child's condition and give some prediction as to the possibility of care at home.

Mary had had a series of sex delinquencies beginning when she was about twenty-four years of age. Her first offense resulted in the birth of Giovanni, but she could not marry this man, because, as she said, "He was already married." However, when Giovanni was about four months old she married another Italian. She soon became tired of him, and repeatedly brought him to court on



various petty charges. After a time he concluded he would not suffer her any longer, so retaliated by bringing her to court with the result that later they were divorced. Shortly after the divorce she became acquainted with Pardino, with whom she lived for some time. "He had always intended to marry me," she said, "but kept putting it off." By this union there was a miscarriage and later the child about whom our case revolves was born. Some time before the baby was born Pardino went back to Italy with the promise that he would return and marry her. Months passed, and she heard from him but once, so decided that if he ever should come back she would take out a warrant and arrest him.

Until the birth of Giovanni five years ago, Mary had lived with her parents. At this time her brother, Tito, felt the disgrace so keenly that he sent her directly from the Lying-In Hospital to the almshouse, where she stayed until she was able to be discharged and support herself and child. Upon leaving the almshouse she secured work in a tailor shop, and the woman with whom she boarded took care of Giovanni during the day. This landlady, however, refused to care for Tony, our present malnourished baby. The grandparents and uncles in the meantime knew nothing of his existence. Because the grandparents were being supported by their married son who had a large family of his own, and because Mary had begged to have her confidence held, they were not told.

As it was impossible to formulate a plan for the baby without knowing first what the mother's condition was, she was persuaded to have an examination in the Outpatient Department of the hospital. Here she was believed to be feeble-minded (a moron) and recommended for a further examination at the State School for the Feeble Minded. Two days later she was met to be accompanied for this further examination, but stated that she could not go as she had just decided to get married for the second time. It was found that this prospective husband had come to her attention through a kind-hearted neighbor who knew she was having a hard time and had heard of a "good

man," a widower with four children of his own, and who wanted to get married.

It rapidly developed that the two had made plans for matrimony; and though a license was refused in this city, they went to an adjoining state and were married by a Justice of the Supreme Court.

This action covered only a few days; meanwhile Tony, the baby, was still in the hospital ward. His step-father refused to allow him to enter the home because of the possible reflection on his character; he also objected to the responsibility of a "sick baby." The mother too wanted him boarded out, but could pay only three dollars a week. They insisted that on no condition could he enter the house until he was a year old; then they would take him as an "adopted child."

In that the mother had a home, the city would not assume control; in that the case was "inconstructive" (as things stood, there was little prospect of achieving lasting results), no private agency would board Tony; and in that it was technically a city case the state could only advise. There being no alternative, the mother was urged to take him, the case to be supervised through the clinic to which the baby was to be brought for some time. So Tony went home, but that very night the mother answered a newspaper advertisement and placed the child in an unregistered boarding home in a neighboring city. Upon investigation this home was found to be a cold, damp shack with no heat (it was late autumn), no food and scant furnishings. The child had developed a running ear and had lost what he had gained while in the hospital. The police were called; the child was removed and placed in the care of the state. In a few days he was readmitted to the hospital. After another medical adjustment, the State Board of Children's Guardians was persuaded, in view of all that had gone before, to place the child in one of its homes where he will be well cared for, fed according to medical recommendation and brought regularly to the clinic for supervision.

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Here again we have a striking illustration of the close interrelation between physical health, mental capacity, economic status and family life. Tony's malnutrition was clearly traceable to his mother's ignorance and indifference. Closely bound up with these were poverty, illegitimacy and (apparently) feeble-mindedness. Perhaps the fact that Mary was the daughter of Italian immigrants may afford a clue to her maladjustment. As the social worker pointed out, the baby's condition was by no means the most important element in this situation; it was the point of contact between this family and the medical-social agency. Moreover, under more favorable circumstances, the malnutrition might have been readily corrected. It was the social situation as a whole—broken health being only one factor—which required extended treatment.

#### MARY MILLS<sup>2</sup>

*Mary Mills.*—Mary Mills first came to the attention of a group of social workers in a large city hospital, when one of the doctors in charge of the ward on which she was a patient stated that she was without funds with which to secure orthopedic apparatus, and in his opinion needed such apparatus to prevent her becoming a chronic invalid. Her diagnosis was hypertrophic arthritis of the spine and, while her prognosis was uncertain, it was felt that with careful following and mechanical support she would later be able to attempt light work.

Miss Mills was a very pathetic, bent, little creature forty-seven years of age, who was born in Ireland and came to America when a young girl to live with her uncle and support herself by housework. She was one of a large family whose ambition was to come to America where "living was easier." From age seventeen to about ten months before our contact she had done domestic work in private families and saved as much as she was able, sending a regular sum to her poor relations in Ireland. She had not

<sup>2</sup> This summary was prepared by a case worker in the Social Service Department of a large hospital.

married or made many friends in this country. Being very reticent and proud, it was somewhat hard to deal with her because she did not want to accept "charity," as she tearfully told the worker at the early interviews. There was no one to give her a home or assume responsibility for board during the long weeks of medical treatment outside the hospital.

Upon investigating her medical history it was found that she had previously received treatment in two other local hospitals and under three private doctors. Each time she had been discharged and attempted work, her attacks had returned. At the onset of her trouble she had \$900. When she came to us she was said to be penniless but actually had \$200 she was saving for a private burial. Her spirit at this time was broken. She pleaded with the doctors to make her well enough to work and with the social worker to keep her out of the almshouse.

Three months' free care in a local hospital with specialized orthopedic care was arranged; a leather jacket and artificial teeth were also secured (part of the medical treatment consisted of the extraction of eighteen good looking teeth); two friends were unearthed and by turn kept her during the weeks of orthopedic out-patient supervision and until she was actually able to attempt housework in a small family in the country during the summer.

In the late fall her name was again on our hospital admission books. She was now a dejected, broken woman, trembling on the threshold of a public institution with little promise of medical or social recovery.

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Here we have an interesting account of physical invalidism combining with social isolation to produce personal demoralization. Apparently the arthritis precipitated a crisis which was bound to appear sooner or later. Miss Mills was reaching the age when her services as a domestic were less desirable than earlier. Her low wages made it difficult to save enough to provide for old age. Yet had she not broken down prematurely she might later have had



enough money to secure admission to some private home for the aged. She evidently had a horror of the almshouse and the potter's field. Hence, when her funds were consumed by the protracted illness, her spirit was broken. What adjustment could be made in such a case? As we see from the summary, friends were discovered and with their help Miss Mills was restored to self-support for a time. But with the second break-down there seemed no alternative for her but the almshouse.

**How Many People Lack Health.**—In our study of family disorganization and of poverty we found statistical enumeration very difficult, partly because of the relativity of our terms and partly because of the lack of an adequate reporting system. Precisely the same situation obtains in the field of health. We must depend on approximations and on figures that give us hints rather than exact measures of sickness and disability.

One index of the scope of our problem consists in the number of persons treated in hospitals and dispensaries. Forty-seven hundred hospitals and sanatoria reported to the United States Census Bureau that in 1922 they treated 5,000,000 patients for a total of 81,500,000 days. In addition, hospitals for mental diseases and institutions for mental defectives cared for another 570,000 persons. During that same year patients made 21,500,000 visits to 2,350 dispensaries.<sup>3</sup>

Another index is the estimate of the Committee on Waste in Industry of the Federated American Engineering Societies<sup>4</sup> that each of the 42,000,000 persons gainfully employed in the United States loses on an average more than eight days a year from illness, a total of 350,000,000 working days. Perhaps 3 per cent of the wage earners, 1,250,000, have tuberculosis. Influenza and pneumonia in non-epidemic years take about 35,000 lives in the working ages and account for at least 350,000 cases of sickness. Typhoid fever fills about 150,000 sick beds annually and

<sup>3</sup> Statement released for publication July 14, 1924, by U. S. Bureau of the Census.

<sup>4</sup> *Waste in Industry*, pp. 21-22.

takes 15,000 lives. Malaria is responsible for much "sub-standard" health and probably affects 1,500,000 people each year. Perhaps 1,500,000 workers are infected with venereal diseases. Six million have organic diseases of various sorts. Twenty-five million have defective vision requiring correction.

At the fiftieth meeting of the National Conference of Social Work Dr. W. S. Rankin estimated that there are each year 1,500,000 cases of well-marked diarrhea and enteritis among infants, 700,000 cases of common communicable diseases in early childhood, from two to four million school children undernourished, another million with diseased tonsils and adenoids, 4,000,000 with visual defects, and 15,000,000 in need of dental treatment.<sup>5</sup>

In 1916 the United States Army, Navy and Marine Corps examined 82,600 applicants for service and rejected 51,200, nearly two-thirds. The principal reasons for rejection were defective eyes, flat feet, being under weight, defective teeth, deformities, varicose veins and heart affections.<sup>6</sup> In the recent War approximately 5,000,000 drafted men were examined. In various groups the number disqualified for military service on account of physical defects ranged from one-fifth to one-third.<sup>7</sup>

During the year 1918, 720,000 school children were examined in New York State. Over 500,000 were found to have physical defects such as poor sight, hearing, teeth, tonsils, breathing, nutrition, lungs, etc.<sup>8</sup> In the Framingham, Massachusetts, health demonstration, every individual who would consent was thoroughly examined. Out of 4,500 persons, 1,100 were found to have "major ills" and 2,400 "minor ills," the latter including defective teeth, enlarged tonsils, colds, etc.<sup>9</sup> The examination of 970 persons at Health Examination Clinics in New York showed

<sup>5</sup> Rankin, W. S., in Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk., 1923: 36-37.

<sup>6</sup> Fisk, E. L., *Health Building and Life Extension*, p. 18.

<sup>7</sup> Ireland, M. W., in Jour. Amer. Med. Ass'n, Feb. 21, 1920. Quoted and discussed in Burnham, A. C., *The Community Health Problem*, pp. 5-6.

<sup>8</sup> Burnham, *op. cit.*, pp. 7-8.

<sup>9</sup> Armstrong, Donald B., Framingham Monograph No. 4, Nov., 1918.



five-eighths (62.2 per cent) in need of medical treatment, one-third (34.4 per cent) in need of hygienic advice and a very small number (2.4 per cent) "normal."<sup>10</sup> Thus it is quite evident that not only are a great many people obviously sick, but a very much larger number are in "sub-standard" health and thereby limited in efficiency and happiness.

**Causes of Physical Failure, Sickness and Death.**—The factors which contribute to physical failure, sickness and death have been classified by Dr. Eugene Lyman Fisk under the following categories.<sup>11</sup> (1) Heredity is always influential and sometimes sets a definite limit on the life span. However its operation is usually indirect. (2) Infection, acute or chronic, by bacteria or parasites is probably the most potent cause of disease. (3) Poison may come from without in the form of drugs or from materials used in one's occupation, as phosphorus or lead. It may also come from within the body through glandular or other changes. (4) Food deficiency, which may be general or specific, i.e., lack of some particular food such as a vitamin. (5) Overeating in general or of specific foods is likewise a frequent cause of "ill health." (6) Air deficiencies or defects may impair health, e.g., lack of sufficient oxygen, high temperature, lack of motion in the air, or excessive humidity. (7) Hormone deficiency, involving a lack of some substance not yet identified, whose function is to stabilize the tissues in health. (8) Hormone excess, as illustrated by overactivity of the endocrines (ductless glands). (9) Physical trauma, as represented by a blow or a fall. (10) Psychic trauma, as from fear, grief or other emotional stress. (11) Physical apathy, e.g., the lack of muscular effort and faulty muscular development due to sedentary occupations. (12) Psychic apathy or a lack of interest in life, which may be both cause and effect of physical apathy.

An interesting study of the influence of various specific diseases as causes of death has been made by a group of

<sup>10</sup> Davis, M. M., in *Survey*, 51: 83-85.

<sup>11</sup> Fisk, E. L., *Health Building and Life Extension*, pp. 56-57.

five life insurance companies which had in 1920 an active, or premium-paying, membership in their industrial departments of 26,000,000 men, women and children, about one-fourth of the entire population of the United States and Canada. Their conclusions are summarized in the following table.

**Economic Consequences of "Ill Health."**—The Committee on Waste in Industry of the Federated American Engineering Societies calculated, on the basis of \$5,000 for each life unnecessarily snuffed out and \$3 per day for the care of each person chronically ill, that the economic loss from preventable disease and death among those classed as gainfully employed is \$1,800,000,000 each year. From their studies of various groups, from insurance experience, from census and draft records, they estimated that "this loss could be materially reduced and leave an economic balance in the working population alone over and above the cost of prevention of at least \$1,000,000,000 a year."<sup>12</sup>

For the individual workman and his family wages stop, savings are consumed, expenses mount up, debts accumulate, the plane of living is lowered, and outside aid may have to be asked. We have seen in our discussion of poverty on how narrow a margin most American families must live. Hence an annual wage loss of perhaps \$30 and medical expenses of a similar amount are a serious matter. Moreover, if workers remained at home every time that their physical condition indicated a need of recuperation, and if they consulted a physician as often as they need to, the immediate financial burden would be materially increased. The very great cost of proper medical, nursing and hospital services is indicated in the reports of some of the commissions on social insurance. Following are some of the rates set by the Los Angeles County Medical Association in 1910.<sup>13</sup> Office fees in ordinary cases \$2 to \$5, telephone advice \$2 to \$5, ordinary visit \$3 to \$5, night visit \$5 to \$10, major operations \$250 to \$5,000, fractured

<sup>12</sup> *Waste in Industry*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>13</sup> Report of the Social Insurance Commission of California, pp. 36-37.



DEATH RATES PER 100,000 FROM PRINCIPAL DISEASES AND  
CONDITIONS, 1916 TO 1920 <sup>14</sup>

Intercompany Industrial Mortality Experience and U. S. Registration  
Area (Ages 1 to 74 Years) Compared

Cause of Death	Intercompany Industrial				U. S. Registration Area (1 to 74 Yrs.)			
	1916- 1920	1920	1916	Per Cent De- cline, 1916- 1920	1916- 1920	1920	1916	Per Cent De- cline, 1916- 1920
All causes of death— Total.....	1164.9	994.5	1160.9	14.3	1062.2	935.7	1005.5	6.9
Influenza—pneumonia...	243.3	158.3	138.3	*14.5	218.4	161.2	110.2	*46.3
Influenza.....	111.5	56.7	22.9	*147.6	93.1	61.6	15.3	*302.6
Pneumonia.....	131.8	101.6	115.4	12.0	125.2	99.6	94.9	*5.0
Tuberculosis—all forms.	154.5	124.9	170.2	26.6	133.9	112.5	141.1	20.3
Tuberculosis of the lungs.....	139.9	113.1	153.1	26.1	119.7	100.4	125.2	19.8
Organic disorders of the heart.....	127.5	123.6	141.5	12.7	108.3	101.8	113.2	10.1
Bright's disease.....	84.0	74.5	100.7	26.0	70.0	61.8	77.9	20.7
Accidents—total.....	73.2	65.4	76.8	14.8	71.3	63.7	76.7	16.9
Traumatism by fall...	10.8	9.5	13.6	30.1	8.6	7.1	10.7	33.6
Automobile accidents...	10.5	12.1	8.1	*49.4	9.0	10.2	7.3	*39.7
Accidental drowning...	8.6	6.7	9.7	30.9	7.1	5.8	8.7	33.3
Burns (conflagration experiences).....	8.5	7.8	8.7	10.3	7.5	7.0	7.5	6.7
Railroad accidents....	7.7	6.0	8.6	30.2	9.4	7.3	11.4	36.0
Other accidents.....	27.1	23.3	28.1	17.1	29.7	26.3	31.1	15.4
Cancer—all forms.....	72.0	75.0	74.2	*1.1	71.9	72.7	72.8	.1
Cerebral hemorrhage— apoplexy.....	62.8	63.5	69.3	8.4	56.8	55.9	58.2	4.0
Diphtheria and croup...	22.9	23.0	21.8	*5.5	14.3	14.8	13.7	*8.0
Diarrhea and enteritis...	21.2	16.0	26.9	40.5	23.1	17.4	26.4	34.1
Puerperal state—total...	20.0	21.3	16.8	*29.8	19.0	19.6	16.9	*16.0
Puerperal septicemia...	6.6	7.5	6.7	*11.9	6.7	6.8	7.0	2.9
Puerperal album. and conv.....	4.7	5.0	4.6	*8.7	4.6	4.9	4.5	*8.9
Accidents of preg- nancy.....	3.1	2.9	1.5	*93.3	2.8	2.8	1.4	*100.0
Diseases of the arteries..	15.6	15.6	17.3	9.8	10.9	10.1	11.4	11.4
Diabetes.....	15.4	15.3	17.0	10.0	14.8	14.8	15.7	5.7
Appendicitis.....	11.2	12.4	11.6	*6.9	12.5	13.4	13.1	*2.3
Cirrhosis of the liver...	10.1	6.3	14.9	57.7	8.5	6.2	11.4	45.6
Suicides—total.....	8.9	7.3	11.0	33.6	12.0	10.1	14.2	28.9
Typhoid fever.....	8.3	5.7	11.2	49.1	11.3	7.8	13.6	42.6
Measles.....	7.9	8.4	10.2	17.6	7.4	7.0	8.6	18.6
Whooping cough.....	5.4	5.8	5.0	*16.0	5.4	5.8	4.8	*20.8
Scarlet fever.....	5.0	6.2	4.3	*44.2	3.5	4.6	3.2	*43.8
Homicides—total.....	3.6	3.4	3.8	10.5	7.1	6.7	7.0	4.3
Pellagra †.....	3.2	2.0	3.5	42.9	3.6	2.4	3.3	27.3
Acute ant. poliomyelitis	3.2	.8	14.1	94.3	2.4	.8	8.8	90.9
Cerebrospinal fever....	1.5	.8	1.1	27.3	2.0	1.3	1.7	23.5
Malaria.....	.8	.7	1.1	36.4	2.9	2.9	2.6	*11.5
War deaths.....	17.6	.7	8.9	92.1				

\* Increase.

† For Met. L. I. Co. and L. I. Co. of Va., only.

<sup>14</sup> *The Mortality Experience of Industrial Policyholders*, p. 17.

arm or leg \$100 to \$500, removal of tonsils \$50 to \$250, obstetrical services when labor is uncomplicated \$25 to \$150. The California Commission found hospital charges ranging from \$15 to \$17.50 per week in wards and \$25 to \$35 for private rooms. For ordinary cases trained nurses were paid \$25 to \$30 per week. Dental rates were similarly high. Obviously most people cannot have much sickness without a serious derangement of the family budget. As a matter of fact, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics found in its study of over 900 families in Washington, D. C., in 1916, that average yearly expenditures on account of sickness ranged from \$12.01 for families with an income under \$600 to \$58.71 for families with an income over \$1,500.<sup>15</sup>

The economic significance of sickness is rendered most vivid by data from family welfare societies. During the six months ending March 31, 1923, the New York Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor cared for 3,875 families in which it found 5,613 separate, important health problems. Five hundred and thirty-nine families showed tuberculosis, 299 showed nervous or mental disease or mental deficiency, 268 showed venereal disease, 236 showed rickets, 163 showed cardiac problems.<sup>16</sup> Another medical study of 1,000 clients of family case working agencies in New York City showed the following proportions of persons with varying degrees of economic incapacity from physical causes—no incapacity 5 per cent, incipient incapacity 40 per cent, temporary incapacity 48 per cent, permanent incapacity 7 per cent. (The examinations included only those members of families who were not so sick as to be confined to home or hospital.) By the term "incipient incapacity" was meant such conditions as defective vision, bad teeth, poor posture or impaired hearing. By "temporary incapacity" was meant such conditions as flat feet, malnutrition, cardiac defects and asthma. "Permanent incapacity" did not mean that all these persons were totally disabled, but that their defects were so extensive or had progressed so far that they

<sup>15</sup> Burnham, *op. cit.*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>16</sup> Burritt, B. B., in *Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk.*, 1923: 80-84.



could not be completely relieved or so alleviated as to restore full working strength. Here were included mental defects, organic heart lesions and lung conditions.<sup>17</sup> The Chicago United Charities reported for the year 1921-22 that 2,125 families out of 5,400 receiving "major services" presented important health problems. For the six years ending in 1922, 12,500, out of 38,000 such families presented cases of acute illness.<sup>18</sup> The California Social Insurance Commission reported in 1917 that among the causes for seeking charitable relief sickness appeared in 2,650 out of 5,300 families in San Francisco and Los Angeles.<sup>19</sup>

It remains to mention briefly the cost of sickness to employers and to the public at large. Commercial and industrial establishments are finding that it pays in dollars and cents to keep their employes well, because sickness means lowered efficiency and morale, substitution and training of new workers. The general public loses every time a potentially productive workman is idle. The taxpayer is made to feel the burden of supporting public hospitals, dispensaries and nursing service as well as relief work made necessary by sickness. The backers of private social and health agencies similarly spend a large amount of money on account of sickness and disability among their clients.

**Effects on Personality.**—In addition to the economic consequences of "ill health" we must consider also the effects on personality and social relations. To some people sickness or disability means discouragement, a sense of futility and inferiority; they seem to lose their grip on life; they are demoralized. To others broken health is a challenge so to order their lives that they may "come back" and play their part once more. To still others illness is an occasion for dropping responsibility and letting others provide for them.

To be well for most of us involves getting up early, going to work, coming up to everyone's standard of us, and having no

<sup>17</sup> Richardson, Anna M., in Survey, 51: 328-330.

<sup>18</sup> *Sixty-six Years of Service*, Chicago United Charities, 1922, p. 35.

<sup>19</sup> Report of Social Insurance Commission of California, p. 74.

excuse for being disagreeable, forgetful, dull or cranky, and no right to demand special consideration of any kind. Day in and day out, this gets to be rather a grind. When sickness comes—perhaps physical sickness, perhaps a neurotic substitute—then comes also the relief of letting go. No more getting up, no more work, and, above all, no more critical attitude from anyone. Instead, the most comfortable bed in the house, general solicitude, and a gratifying attention to our whims. We may not think much about this contrast. It has come to our notice so early that we have forgotten how well we understand ourselves. Even a four-year-old may sense that a stomach-ache turneth away wrath, and a ten-year-old has learned for a certainty that a head-ache absolves from study. But adults can not use their ailments so naively. The more responsible our position the more severe must be the illness which makes us relinquish our hold. Our conscious determination to keep well, and our less clear temptation to seek refuge in illness may involve us in a painful struggle. But when the fight is over, and we are safely tucked in bed, with our hands lying relaxed and aimless on the neatly turned-down sheets, then come the compensations.<sup>20</sup>

In children sickness may have some significant effects on personality by enforcing absence from school. They may fall behind in their work and become discouraged or they may take pleasure in escaping the drudgery of the classroom. "The habitual truant is not a care-free boy with an overflow of physical vitality; he is shown by actual study, to be under more than the usual number of physical handicaps."<sup>21</sup>

Sickness and disability may operate in very special ways to bring about demoralization of the immigrant in America, as we saw in the case of Mary Mills. In the "old country" there is some place for him in the peasant family, however badly disabled he may be. If he cannot at least supervise the children or do some little chores, he is dependent only on the family of which he is a rightful member. He feels little sense of humiliation; he does not tend to exaggerate his disability to escape work, because he is vitally interested

<sup>20</sup> Quoted from "Mental Health," published by the Maryland Mental Hygiene Society, in *Survey*, 51:392. This sort of demoralization is admirably illustrated by a series of three "stream pictures" of "imaginary invalids" published in *The Family*, 4: 256-257; 5: 8-9, 37-39.

<sup>21</sup> Van Waters, Miriam, *Youth in Conflict*, p. 92.



in the welfare of the family group. On the other hand, those who support him have no feeling of sacrifice, but accept the situation as perfectly natural. In America, however, the immigrant is likely to be detached from his family and community. If he is sick or injured, there may be no place for him but a hospital. Now to the European peasant a hospital is a symbol of pauperization and he will refuse to go so long as his self-respect remains. When American social workers, not realizing this, compel him to go, he may feel that he has been pushed out of normal social life, may cease to care for any social standards, and may beg or steal in order to escape the ultimate humiliation. "Even a temporary disability by reinforcing the general impression of insecurity brought by American conditions, produces an attitude of despondency which may even lead to suicide."<sup>22</sup>

Finally we may note some of the possible relations between "ill health" and delinquency. Sutherland has pointed out that there are three principal ways in which physical ailments and defects may be related to crime.<sup>23</sup> First, they may cause irritation and discomfort, and in seeking relief from this condition the patient may indulge in various sorts of erratic conduct. Second, they may cause weakness, inefficiency, retardation and failure. The victim is apt to feel himself left out of things and hence not responsible to the group for conforming to its code. Third, some ailments may cause a lowering of one's social status and a feeling of inferiority. In the desperate effort to keep up he may resort to measures not within the law.

Broken health thus often means to the person unfulfilled wishes, social isolation, loss of self-confidence—a general deterioration of personality. On the other hand, if not too serious or too long continued, it may prove to be a valuable stimulus to personal regeneration. Someone has said that the best way to live a long and useful life is to acquire early some physical defect and then take care of oneself.

<sup>22</sup> Thomas, W. I., and Znaniecki, F., *Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, 5: 205-207.

<sup>23</sup> Sutherland, E. H., *Criminology*, p. 180.

**Effects on Family Life.**—Passing from personality to group life, as affected by lack of health, we are not really leaving one subject and going to another. We are re-examining the same human experiences from another angle. Personality and social relations are to each other as the two sides of a coin. The existence of either without the other is inconceivable.

Of the various social groups it is the family that is most immediately affected by illness. The sick member can not—for a time at least—be counted upon to play his accustomed rôle. Moreover, the others must change some of their ways in order to facilitate the recovery or minimize the suffering of the invalid. Sometimes the patient imagines himself in much worse physical condition than the physician finds him to be. Under these circumstances he may impose unduly on other members of the household. If they learn that he has been deceiving them, and himself as well, they are forced to seem unsympathetic and hard-hearted in order to bring him to a realization of his true condition. On the other hand, failure to recognize the seriousness of a diseased condition in the lungs or heart, for example, may cause the patient to be misjudged and imposed upon. Sometimes a physical ailment may be the basis of strained relations in the family. This is particularly likely to be true when husband or wife is found to be syphilitic.

Such a case was that of the X family whose baby was desperately ill with congenital syphilis.<sup>24</sup> The husband and his family had blamed the mother, who was, however, apparently healthy and unwilling to admit guilt. A blood test showed that she did have syphilis, but since she was not known to have been irregular in her sex relations, the husband, too, was induced to have an examination. The results showed him also to be syphilitic; whereupon he confessed that he was responsible for the misery of his wife and baby. This acknowledgment together with prolonged medical treatment restored the family unity which had been rapidly breaking down.

<sup>24</sup> Cannon, Ida M., *Social Work in Hospitals*, p. 42.



Another instance of the way in which lack of health may contribute to family disorganization is found in the S family.<sup>25</sup> Both husband and wife through some previous illness had acquired the notion that they were chronic invalids. Their ten-year-old daughter Julia became the household drudge, caring for her bedridden father and mother and six brothers and sisters. Naturally her school work suffered and she herself became "run down." The house was dirty and the other children were running wild.

Another situation was that of the Sullivan family.<sup>26</sup> Mrs. Sullivan's mother, an elderly woman, was living with them. Now she was one of those who not only "enjoyed ill health" herself, but was always seeing some dire threat to the physical well-being of others. She loved to discuss symptoms and took pleasure in anticipating the worst. Hence an operation on Mrs. Sullivan which was a surgical success, failed to restore her to health. Instead she continued to slump. Her house was in confusion and meals were seldom ready on time. Mr. Sullivan frequently had to cook his breakfast, pack his lunch and get dinner when he returned from work. Under these conditions his efficiency as a workman deteriorated. He was late in arriving; he was dull and sluggish at his tasks. Presently he lost his job.

Illness of parents may mean that the children do not receive needed attention and get into difficulties of various sorts, even serious delinquencies. That seems to have been the case with Olaf Kellman<sup>27</sup> whose father was sickly for a number of years after his marriage. Much later he was found to have a severe heart disease and it was suspected that he was tuberculous. Hence his earning power was low and the family lived in poverty. When Mr. Kellman came home he had to rest and could not devote himself to the children. Olaf's mother suffered from the age of 18 with an incurable disease of the muscles and nerves. At 22 she

<sup>25</sup> Family, 4: 256-7.

<sup>26</sup> de Schweinitz, Karl, *The Art of Helping People Out of Trouble*, pp. 78-80.

<sup>27</sup> Judge Baker Foundation, *Case Studies*, Series I, Case 8.

was sent to a tuberculosis sanatorium but returned much improved. With this background it is not difficult to understand her inertia, her nagging and inconsistent discipline. From an unhappy home with meager interests and no wholesome relations, Olaf turned to the street and a gang of young criminals. At 15 he was arrested for stealing.

Partly to prevent the appearance of delinquency and partly to assure appropriate care and training, it is sometimes necessary to place the children of a sick parent into foster homes for a time. This happened to the Crandall family.<sup>28</sup> One summer Mr. Crandall was on strike, and afterwards found work so slack that his earnings were very low. So Mrs. Crandall hired a housekeeper and went to work in a munitions factory. During the fall and winter her husband and three children had influenza. Mrs. Crandall took care of them and kept house during the weeks of their critical illness. As a result she broke down and was sick in bed for two weeks. It was made possible for her to go away for a good rest. During her absence Mr. Crandall tried several housekeepers and boarded the children out for a time. But none of these arrangements was satisfactory. Besides, the series of misfortunes was causing worry and discouragement. Humiliated and almost in despair the man turned to a child-caring agency for help.

We must not, however, be misled into assuming that sickness and disability always tend to break down family life.<sup>29</sup> On the contrary, we have all known families in which the illness of a kinsman is the signal for dropping petty squabbles and rallying loyally to the support of the unfortunate one. Such an instance came to light some years ago in an eastern city. Mr. and Mrs. Jones were regarded by their children as being a bit old-fashioned. Their New England piety and strictness were too much for the young folks who had all left home, although only one of the four was

<sup>28</sup> Child Welfare League of America, *Case Studies*, Case I.

<sup>29</sup> An interesting contrast to the case just cited is number 9 in the Judge Baker Foundation series, where, although delinquency occurred and both parents were unwell, the trouble was traceable to other causes.



married. After a time Mrs. Jones became quite ill. At once a daughter gave up her position in another city and returned to care for her mother. One son came home for his meals. There was now a larger measure of real family life than there had been for several years.

Less information is at hand concerning the significance of sickness and disability for other social groups than the family. But when data do become available we anticipate that they will show just as marked influences on other social relations and group organization as on family life.

**Health Workers.**—To meet the human needs which appear in connection with broken health there have developed a number of professions and near-professions—medicine with its various specialties, nursing, hospital social work, nutrition work, household management, public health administration, psychiatry, and clinical psychology. We are all familiar with the fact that physicians are specializing to such a degree that to secure an all-round diagnosis and treatment we may have to consult a dozen different practitioners. We have also noted the great cost of adequate medical service under our present system—or lack of system—of individual practice. Those who live in rural districts are frequently without any medical service whatsoever. The problem of bringing good medical attention within the geographical and financial reach of everyone is, therefore, very urgent. Some hope of its solution is held out by the group practice of medicine, traveling clinics and health insurance. Of these we shall have more to say presently.

Alongside and, on the whole, subsidiary to medicine has grown up nursing, at least a candidate for professional status. The cost of employing a nurse in cases of illness has been pointed out. We might as well recognize, too, that even if we had plenty of money, we could not always get a nurse, because the number is limited. Partly to meet the needs of people who cannot afford to employ a private nurse or go to a hospital, and partly to perform certain other services there have appeared public health nurses. These women make intermittent visits to care for patients,

but still more to give instruction in the care of the sick and make arrangements for such further treatment as may be needed. By a natural development it has come about that the public health nurse is primarily engaged in the prevention of disease and building up of health. She is a teacher giving instruction in homes, clinics and special classes.

Some twenty years ago it became apparent that physicians and nurses were overlooking some of the most important factors affecting the welfare of their patients, especially those economic and social conditions which we have discussed in this chapter. To overcome this lack there has been brought about an adaptation of social case work to supplement the other services of hospitals and dispensaries. The hospital social worker is expected to secure the social history of the patient, arrange for care and treatment prescribed by the physician, follow up the case to see that instructions are carried out, help the patient to modify his attitudes, help adjust relations in the family, school or place of employment, arrange to meet financial needs and plan for the future. On the one hand, hospital social workers are a sub-variety of social case workers; on the other, they are themselves divided into smaller groups specializing in work with sick children, people with venereal diseases, the disabled, mental cases, etc. Those who do social work especially with patients presenting mental symptoms are known as psychiatric social workers.

The household economist and nutrition worker give instruction and demonstrations in the selection and preparation of foods, budgetmaking, clothing, house furnishing, sanitation, etc., in homes, classes and sometimes in clinics. The health officer is responsible for enforcing laws concerning sanitation and quarantine, inspecting markets, dairies, houses and public conveyances, spreading publicity through lectures, newspapers and official reports. The psychiatrist and clinical psychologist, whom we shall discuss more fully in later chapters, are concerned with mental abnormalities and unusual types of behavior. The



psychiatrist is always a person with medical training which the psychologist usually does not have.

**Health Agencies.**—The organizations and institutions through which health workers operate in the local community include hospitals, dispensaries, health centers, visiting nursing associations, health departments, divisions of health in departments of education, commercial establishments and various private agencies which are engaged primarily in research and education concerning matters of health. Hospital service is available to the well-to-do through their ability to pay the fees charged in private institutions. The very poor (economically speaking) also have access to very good hospital facilities in many places, either as charity patients in private hospitals or as the inmates of public institutions. The great middle class cannot, for the most part, make use of hospitals without serious financial embarrassment.

Dispensaries, originally places for the "dispensing" of drugs, are operated now as groups of clinics in which patients who are able to get about may receive diagnosis and treatment. Usually a dispensary has no beds except for emergency use, nor does it have provision for major operations. Sometimes it is run as an independent institution, sometimes as the "outpatient" department of a hospital. Some of the institutions called health centers are practically dispensaries; others are the headquarters of various health agencies operating in a given territory; still others are centers of preventive rather than of curative work.

The nature of a visiting nursing association has been suggested in our description of the public health nurse. The work of health departments is likewise indicated in the duties of a health officer. But in addition, they often administer hospitals, sanatoria and bureaus of vital statistics. Departments of education frequently employ physicians and nurses to examine school children, advise parents as to needed medical attention, exclude children with communicable diseases and assist in health education. Commercial and industrial establishments are more and more provid-

ing a medical staff to examine new employes, give periodic examinations to all their workers, administer first aid, conduct an emergency hospital and carry on health education. Finally there is a host of private organizations engaged in research and publicity work as well as in supplementing the services of the other public health agencies. These include tuberculosis association, housing committee, consumers' league, baby hygiene association, etc.

Besides the agencies which do health work in local communities, there are numbers of state and national organizations, both public and private. Limited space forbids that we should do more than mention a few of them here. In almost every state in the union there will be found a state board of health, state tuberculosis association, public hospitals for special types of physically and mentally sick people and various private sanatoria. Operating more or less throughout the country are the United States Public Health Service, American Red Cross, American Child Health Association, National Organization for Public Health Nursing, National Tuberculosis Association, American Social Hygiene Association, National Committee for Mental Hygiene, American Society for Control of Cancer, American Heart Association, and others too numerous to mention.<sup>30</sup>

**Health Insurance.**—In spite of these many organizations and institutions, there are many people in the United States who do not have proper medical attention in time of illness or disability, and who as a consequence experience financial, social and personal difficulties. Some provision is made through lodges and trade unions for people of modest means, while those with a little larger income carry insurance against sickness, accident, disability and death.

<sup>30</sup> For brief descriptions of these organizations and their work, names of their publications and the addresses of their headquarters consult the following sources: Hendricks, Genevieve P., *Handbook of Social Resources of the United States*, Washington: American Red Cross (A. R. C. 412), 1921; Rushmore, Elsie M. (editor), *Social Workers' Guide to the Serial Publications of Representative Social Agencies*, New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1921. *The Survey's Directory of Social Agencies*, Survey Graphic, every month.



Some insurance companies are providing nursing service for sick policyholders and annual physical examinations for all. But as yet the medical service available is but a fraction of that needed, and the cash benefits provided are in most instances a mere pittance. There has been some agitation for state health insurance; a number of states have had commissions to investigate the matter; but nothing further has been done in this country. In contrast to the American situation, there were in 1920 twelve European countries with compulsory health insurance.<sup>31</sup> As an illustration of this scheme we shall describe briefly the British system which was adopted in 1911.

With a few minor exceptions the British law applies to all employed persons between the ages of 16 and 70, unless they are engaged in other than manual labor at a wage of more than 160 pounds a year. There are five types of benefits: (1) sickness benefit in cash, (2) disablement benefit in cash, (3) medical care, (4) maternity care, (5) sanatorium care for cases of tuberculosis. The sickness benefit of approximately \$2.50 a week is payable for 26 weeks beginning with the fourth day of disability for persons who have been insured for 26 weeks and made 26 weekly contributions. The full amount, however, is not available until 104 contributions have been paid. If the disability extends beyond 26 weeks, the amount of the benefit is reduced, this constituting the disablement benefit. The medical benefit guarantees the attendance of an ordinary practitioner chosen by the insured workman from a "panel-list" prepared by the commissioners of insurance. The maternity benefit of approximately \$7.50 is extended both to insured women and to the wives of insured men. In case a woman belongs in both categories she receives a double benefit. All this is contingent on her having previously paid 42 contributions, in case of her own insurance, and abstaining from work for four weeks after child-birth. The sanatorium benefit is as yet limited to tuberculosis. The cost of the insurance is borne by the insured workers and their employers in approximately equal amounts. The

<sup>31</sup> Gillin, J. L., *Poverty and Dependency*, p. 553.

employer is authorized to deduct the employe's share from his wages, and is required to affix stamps on the insured worker's card. The latter deposits his card quarterly with the society in which he is insured, which in turn collects its share of the income from the insurance commission. The cash benefits are administered by "friendly societies," trade unions and industrial insurance companies. The medical benefits are controlled by local insurance committees consisting of representatives of the insured, of the physicians and of public officials.

Admittedly no entirely satisfactory scheme has yet been devised for securing to everyone adequate medical service and continuance of income during sickness and disability, but the system of compulsory insurance adopted in Great Britain and other European countries seems to have gone a long way toward solving these problems. Opposition to such a plan in the United States has come largely from established insurance companies, physicians and trade unions, truly strange bed-fellows. The insurance companies seem to fear competition, the physicians anticipate interference with their freedom and the trade unions are unwilling to lose one of their "talking points" which stresses their sickness benefits to members.

**Promotion of Health.**—Throughout this chapter we have been discussing, by implication at least, three phases of the problems associated with health: (1) the care and treatment of those who are sick or disabled, with the aim, so far as possible, of facilitating their early and complete recovery, (2) the prevention of sickness, accidents and other forms of physical failure, (3) the promotion of health, increasing vigor and efficiency, extending the span and enriching the content of life. But before passing on it seems worth while to emphasize especially the constructive, forward-looking phase. For the promotion of health we look, first of all, to education in personal hygiene, in a scientific attitude and in the necessity and means of social organization for this purpose. Second, we shall depend increasingly on periodic examinations of all people for the detection of defects, disabilities and specific diseases. Third, we shall find it wise



to provide adequate and prompt treatment for all defects, disabilities and diseases which may be detected. Fourth, we shall replan our mode of living, especially on the economic side, so as to build up instead of breaking down the human machine. We shall probably make definite provision for rest periods each day, annual vacations on pay, abstention from work (without serious financial loss) when physical condition warrants and, in general, avoidance of undue fatigue. Fifth, we shall find it necessary to reorganize our economic system so as to provide an adequate income for everybody, for low wages are intimately bound up with broken health. Sixth, we shall want to replan our homes, our work-places, our places of amusement, places of public gathering and transportation facilities so as to reduce strain and exposure to infection, facilitate enjoyment of work and induce rest. In general, we shall find that the promotion of health is bound up, both as cause and as effect, with improved economic conditions, with wholesome family life, and with the balanced development of personality.

The foregoing paragraphs give us just a hint of the manifold devices and agencies which have been brought into being for the treatment and prevention of disease and for the promotion of health. After reviewing a list of available health services one almost wonders why there should be any sickness at all. Then when we look at the statistics of morbidity and mortality we are puzzled at the ineffectiveness of our apparently splendid health agencies. What can account for this discrepancy? Joseph K. Hart has given us a clue.

It seems sometimes that in our complicated civilization the hardest thing to do is to follow the obvious clue of reason. How much of the difficulty is due to the weight of the folkways, how much to those emotional attitudes of which the psychiatrists so persuasively remind us, how much to the subtle influence of those who prosper by existing irrationalities, we are not yet wise enough to say. But we are often brought face to face with a situation where elaborate propaganda seems in order to give common sense a chance . . .

. . . If there is a way to protect children against diphtheria,

the obvious thing is to use it promptly and universally; but even the thrilling story of the dash of dog-teams across Alaska with the precious serum will not be enough to persuade some mothers to go 'round the corner for antitoxin for their own children before it is too late.

The fact is that while finding out what is the reasonable thing to do is the first step in hitching the world along; rationality alone gets us nowhere. Digging a straight course through our inertia is like digging the Panama Canal through the Culebra Cut. It's hard work to use the cutting tools of common sense. We need emotional dynamite to break through.<sup>32</sup>

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write a detailed account of your experiences during and following some illness or accident. What modifications were there of your own attitudes and those of your family?
2. Write a similar account of your observations of the illness of another person. Emphasize the effects on personality and on family life.
3. Secure statistics showing deaths, reported diseases, mortality and morbidity rates for your home district and state for a recent year and for a year a decade earlier. See if you can discover any reasons for changes in the general rates or the rates for specific diseases.
4. Contrast the data from your home district with those from some other city or county. Contrast those from your home state with those from some other state.
5. Secure statistics from local hospitals concerning the number and types of patients cared for during one year. What was the average length of stay?
6. Secure data from social agencies in your home district showing the correlation of broken health with poverty, with delinquency.
7. Make a list of the health agencies in your home district. Visit a hospital or dispensary and report on:
  - a. History and control
  - b. Financing
  - c. Physical equipment—buildings and furnishings
  - d. Medical staff, membership and organization
  - e. Other employees—nurses, social workers, attendants, domestics
  - f. Admission, dismissal and charges
8. Visit the office of a public health department or a private health agency and report in similar fashion, adding a state-

<sup>32</sup> Hart, Jos. K., in *Survey*, 53: 561.



ment of the various functions performed and methods of work.

9. What health insurance or approximations thereto can you discover in local trade unions, lodges or other organizations? List and describe in as much detail as possible.
10. Draw a chart showing the interrelations of health agencies in your home district. Draw a similar chart showing the interrelations of state-wide health agencies.

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## CHAPTER XXI

### TUBERCULOSIS

#### MR. WALTERS AND HIS FAMILY

One April day Mrs. Walters came to the office of the Family Welfare Society asking help in finding work for her husband. He was formerly a coal-miner, but had been a broom-maker for ten years. During the last six months he had had no regular work; just now he was trying to sell brooms, but making very little money. The Walters lost their five-year-old girl the week before and were in debt to the undertaker. The rent was past due. Amy, aged 20, was working and Frank, aged 14, was helping his father with the brooms. He had no employment certificate and was not attending the part-time school for working children. Mrs. Walters' niece, who lived with them, contributed something toward the family expenses. Mr. Walters seemed utterly lacking in ambition and initiative. Was he lazy or was he sick? It later came out that he was tuberculous and a hard drinker. Other health problems presently appeared. Mrs. Walters was five months pregnant. Lucy, aged 12, was not strong, and Emily, aged 10, was a tuberculosis suspect. The family had a physician only once before the death of the other little girl. The reasons were ignorance and poverty. They were living in an old seven-room house, rather rickety and cold but clean. The household consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Walters, five children and Mrs. Walters' niece. Later the back rooms were rented to an older son and his wife, and two upstairs rooms were let to other tenants.

*Mr. Walters*, aged 46, was born in a southern state, had very little education and became a miner. Ten years before

this story begins he came to the city and learned broom-making. He was a hard drinker and had tuberculosis. His teeth were bad and were later all extracted. When sober he was kind to his family, but shifted his responsibilities to Mrs. Walters' shoulders. He seemed lacking in ambition which may, of course, have been due to his physical condition. At the sanatorium to which he was sent he was regarded as the laziest man they ever saw—"perfectly content to sit around day after day just smoking and grumbling about things in general." When he came home he quarreled over trivial matters with his son Frank.

*Mrs. Walters*, aged 39, was also born in the South and like her husband had very little education. She married at the age of 15 and worked hard all her life. She was ambitious for her children, but too indulgent for their good. As one neighbor put it, "She makes a door mat of herself for the children." When first seen she was five months pregnant and two months later gave birth to a baby girl. A public hospital reported that she had an abdominal disturbance and her heart did not function properly. Mrs. Walters was a fairly good seamstress and had done washings to increase the family income.

*Amy*, aged 20, was working when the "case opened," but married eight months later. This deprived the family of part of its income. She was a stenographer and continued to work after her marriage, but did not help her parents.

*Frank*, aged 14, was tall and mature for his age, weighing about 135 pounds. He had dropped out of school entirely and was working without the required permit, but in September began attending a part-time school. He had been a difficult boy in the home, rough to the younger children, and sometimes refusing to eat with the rest of the family. His mother had pampered him in the effort to avoid friction. She let the younger children sleep until he left the house and gave them their supper before his return in the evening. Frank had also puzzled his teachers. When he first entered the part-time school, he would not greet his teacher nor voluntarily answer questions. Sug-



gested explanations are: the father's alcoholism and mistreatment of the mother before Frank's birth, mental abnormality, adolescent upheaval and irritation over a badly disorganized household. He was never examined by a psychologist or a psychiatrist, nor is there any clear evidence as to the first explanation. But because of his marked improvement in behavior later the last two suggestions are probably more nearly correct.

*Lucy*, aged 12, was small and not very rugged, but bright and ambitious. A mental test showed an Intelligence Quotient of 117. She was a freshman in high school taking a business course. This was made possible through a scholarship of two dollars a week for carfare, lunches and school supplies. She earned a little by caring for babies in the afternoon. Later she gave her mother some difficulty with reference to clothes, but probably there is nothing unusual in this.

*Emily*, aged 10, was small and quite thin—a "T. B." suspect. She was bright, stood well in her classes and at eleven years was in 6A grade.

*Fanny*, aged 3, was plump, active and very bright.

*Kathleen*, the seven-months baby, was very tiny, but doubled her weight in 10 months, weighing at that age 8 pounds.

*Married Children.*—Besides the children named, there was a married son and a married daughter. The son lived in the same house for a time, but soon moved on to another state. Later he deserted his wife and she secured a divorce. He had St. Vitus' Dance when a child and at 21 was still having "nervous spells." The married daughter helped to care for the younger children when Mrs. Walters was in the hospital. Otherwise she did not render much assistance for the good reason that she herself had a very sick baby.

*Other Relatives.*—The niece, mentioned before, married soon and gave no more help. Two nephews who stayed with the Walters for a time were themselves unemployed. Mrs. Walters had three brothers—one living in the city and willing to help as much as possible. The other two brothers

were miners, with small incomes and large families, living some distance from the city.

### *Summary of Difficulties*

- a. Mr. Walters had tuberculosis, was a hard drinker and inclined to be lazy.
- b. The income was irregular and inadequate.
- c. Mrs. Walters was a lax disciplinarian and had some abdominal and cardiac difficulties.
- d. Emily was a tuberculosis suspect.
- e. Frank was a "conduct problem."
- f. Later—Mr. Walters on a visit from the sanatorium refused to recognize the obvious unwisdom of increasing the family.

### *Plan of Treatment* (outlined the following February)

- a. Have Mr. Walters kept under the care of a tuberculosis specialist until his trouble is arrested.
- b. Get Mr. Walters upper and lower sets of teeth.
- c. Provide groceries.
- d. Encourage Mrs. Walters to have the children help her in the housework.
- e. Encourage Frank to make garden and keep yard clean.
- f. School to give Emily special attention and provide milk.
- g. Membership for Lucy in Girl Reserves and vacation at Y. W. C. A. camp in summer.
- h. Scholarship for Lucy.

*Services Rendered.*—The plan was carried out pretty much as outlined. Mr. Walters after examination at the Public Hospital was sent to a tuberculosis sanatorium where he improved rapidly and was later given a position at \$50 a month and living. His attitude toward the family, especially his wife, was the subject of some vigorous interviews with the social workers. Mrs. Walters was given hospital care during confinement and nursing supervision afterward. Frank went to part-time school and gradually



increased his earnings. His conduct was watched and guided by the case worker, teacher and principal.

*Results Observed.*—Mr. Walters is very much improved, although he still has coughing spells in the morning. With supervision, the physician thinks, there is little danger of his breaking down again. He continues to hold his position in the sanatorium. Mrs. Walters is improved in health and said some time ago that she had “never in her life been so comfortable and felt so encouraged about the future.” She has also become a better housekeeper and manager. Lucy and Emily are getting along nicely in school, but appear to have contracted their father’s disease. Emily now has very clouded lungs and will be sent to the State Sanatorium for incipient cases of tuberculosis. Lucy has infected tonsils, looks bad and is evidently not well. It is feared that she too will develop tuberculosis. Fanny and the baby, who had whooping cough, are now well. Frank is no longer the problem that he was; he is more contented in the home and ready to assume a larger share of its responsibilities.

A number of rooms have been papered. The house looks neat and homelike. The kitchen is improved, having new white oil cloth back of the stove and fresh newspaper back of the tables to protect the wall paper. A fresh curtain made from an old gingham dress has been put in front of a box which is used for a cupboard.

The following winter no material relief was given the Walters family, but contact was maintained through a “volunteer” worker.

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**Personal Problems Associated with Tuberculosis.**—Tuberculosis like every other misfortune is not an isolated phenomenon, but is intimately bound up with various physical, mental and social conditions. So far from happening in a vacuum, it comes to flesh and blood folks who are husbands, wives, parents, or children, with responsibilities and ambitions. Moreover, the tuberculosis is frequently not the only disturbing factor. It is often merely

“the last straw that breaks the camel’s back.” So, in the Walters family there were already many and varied problems—the man’s alcoholism, the woman’s broken health and easy-going ways, Frank’s troublesome conduct, the broken health of the little girls, the death of one child, and poor housing.

For the patient himself, there are a number of adjustments that must be made. In the first place, he needs to realize the seriousness of his condition and yet maintain a hopeful attitude. Two quite opposite reactions to the diagnosis of tuberculosis were the indifference of Mr. Walters and the temporary depression of Dr. Trudeau.<sup>1</sup> The latter has described his experience in the following words.<sup>2</sup>

I think I know something of the feelings of the man at the bar who is told he is to be hanged on a given date, for in those days pulmonary consumption was considered as absolutely fatal. I pulled myself together, put as good a face on the matter as I could, and escaped from the office after thanking the doctor for his examination. When I got outside, as I stood on Dr. Jane-way’s stoop, I felt stunned. It seemed to me the world had suddenly grown dark. The sun was shining, it is true, and the street was filled with the rush and noise of traffic, but to me the world had lost every vestige of brightness. I had consumption—that most fatal of diseases! Had I not seen it in all its horrors in my brother’s case? It meant death and I had never thought of death before! Was I ready to die? How could I tell my wife, whom I had just left in unconscious happiness with the little baby in our new home? And my rose-colored dreams of achievement and professional success in New York! They were all shattered now, and in their place only exile and the inevitable end remained!

Another problem which arises is that involved in the separation of the patient from his family. The patient himself needs the assurance that those left behind will be cared for, while they in turn need to be rescued from worry

<sup>1</sup> For the benefit of those who do not know, it should be stated that Dr. E. L. Trudeau, himself long a sufferer from tuberculosis, founded the first sanatorium for the treatment of this disease in the United States. References to Dr. Trudeau which appear in this chapter are based on his *Autobiography*.

<sup>2</sup> Trudeau, E. L., *Autobiography*, pp. 71-2.



as to what may happen to their loved one in the institution to which he may go. In Mr. Walters' case this seems not to have been a serious matter, but there are many patients whose fear of sanatoria and of institutions in general is such that the very greatest efforts are required to induce them to go. Once they have accepted the fact of illness and have entered upon a course of treatment either in a sanatorium or at home, there is still for many a terrific struggle against the boredom and depression which are likely to accompany the monotonous regimen of the rest cure. "Christy" Mathewson of baseball fame was for three years a patient in a tuberculosis sanatorium. He described his feelings in these words: "You get into a very peculiar frame of mind. There is no doubt about that. To your own surprise you find the tears roll down your cheeks. I had plenty of time to think over a lot of things. . . ." <sup>3</sup>

If the patient remains at home, as by far the greater number do, there are numerous difficulties to overcome. First of all, precautions must be taken to guard against infecting other members of the family. Failure to take such precautionary measures was undoubtedly the reason that Emily Walters acquired her father's disease. Then there are other problems to meet. It is very hard for the patient to cut himself off from the ordinary activities and prevent himself from responding to the constant stimulations to participate in various household activities. Even if he succeeds in keeping his body at rest, the constant reminders of what he would be doing if he were well tend to produce a mental condition which is not favorable to recovery. If, on the other hand, a patient goes to a sanatorium he may find it hard to fit himself into the scheme of life which is imposed there. Mr. Walters resisted the regulations and refused to "play the game" as directed by the staff of the sanatorium. His improved condition, in spite of this behavior, is probably due to the fact that his disease was not far advanced. In marked contrast to Mr. Walters' reaction, we have the unusually fine spirit in which Christy

<sup>3</sup> Williams, Helena L., *The Comeback of Christy Mathewson*, Survey, 51: 249.

Mathewson did accept the sanatorium regime.<sup>4</sup> "The trouble with lots of T. B. patients is that they have never had to stick to the rules. They have thought they could do as they liked. Anyone that has been in college athletics and professional baseball as much as I have been, knows that orders are given to be obeyed."

Another problem of the patient is to find substitutes for his previous occupations. While he is in bed the possibilities of action are exceedingly limited and during convalescence they are increased very, very slowly. For one who has led an active life, this is perhaps one of the hardest of all experiences to bear. With Christy Mathewson the first substitute was checkers, to which was added, when he became stronger, the study of wild flowers. But even after the disease has been arrested and the patient is greatly improved, perhaps "cured," as we commonly say, it is still necessary for him to go slowly and he may have to change his program of life very materially. In general, we may say that the problems of the patient are those which arise because he must effect a thorough-going reorganization of habits and discover new means of satisfying his wishes.

**Social Problems.**—But these problems are faced not merely by the patient himself. With varying degrees of difference they are also the problems of his family and his friends. They too must bring themselves to an acceptance of the diagnosis and the program of treatment whether in home or sanatorium. It is their responsibility to guard him against worry and keep him in good spirits. If it is the wage earner who is sick, they must find means of providing an income. If the patient is the housewife, then it may be necessary to find ways of caring for children. The patient inevitably responds to the attitudes of family and friends as manifested by word, deed, facial expression, tone of voice and general disposition. These can help or harm in ways that are decisive. Mrs. Mathewson was her husband's nurse for a long time and there is little doubt that her devoted service and especially her attitude of continued cheerfulness and hope were largely responsible for his

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 248 ff.



recovery. Dr. Trudeau ascribed an important part of his own improved condition to the wholesome group of folk with whom he lived in the Adirondacks.

For the larger society, there is, of course, a closely related group of problems involved in providing facilities for the care, treatment and recovery of the sick; providing for families of patients during illness and convalescence, or after death; isolating patients who are a menace to others; teaching people to guard themselves against infection and to build up powers of resistance; providing healthy conditions for living and working so that infection will be reduced and powers of resistance increased.

Society has also another problem to meet in the indigent migratory consumptive. Popular tradition assigns to certain parts of the country special powers of restoring the health of the tuberculous. Hence, many patients flock into the Southwest regardless of their financial resources and absence from home and friends. In a study made in 1921<sup>5</sup> it was found that among the consumptives who applied to social agencies for help, nearly two-thirds had been in the given locality less than two years. In Phoenix, Arizona, the proportion was 83 per cent. In contrast to this, the proportion of non-resident tuberculosis patients aided by social agencies in Cleveland was only 11 per cent. As a result, a tremendous burden was imposed upon the communities to which they went in the Southwest, because a large number of these patients had spent their all in reaching the promised land and had nothing left with which to pay for sanatorium care and treatment, or even the ordinary necessities of life. Their friends and kinsmen were far away. They were stranded and forced to call upon public or private agencies for help.

**Predisposing Causes.**—In discussing the causes of tuberculosis it is important to distinguish between what the medical folk call “exciting” and “predisposing” causes. By the former is meant infection by the tubercle bacillus

<sup>5</sup> Whitney, Jessamine S., *Report on the Indigent Migratory Consumptive in Certain Cities of the Southwest*, U. S. Pub. Health Reports, 38: 587-616. Also, Reprint No. 824.

which is contained in the sputum of persons suffering from this disease or carried in milk from tuberculous cows. There are probably at all times a million people in the United States sick with tuberculosis. Many of them are careless or ignorant and large numbers of them are not in hospitals. Some of them appear to be well and strong. Hence, in spite of all precautions most people are slightly infected with tubercle bacilli at an early age.<sup>6</sup> But most people do not succumb to tuberculosis. The factors that determine which infected persons shall suffer from the disease and which ones shall escape are what we mean by "predisposing causes." It is of these that we shall speak more particularly in this chapter.

First of all, our attention is drawn to the fact that the mortality rates from tuberculosis among peoples of different races and nationalities differ considerably. Indeed the variations between these different nationality stocks has been found so great as to compel recognition of the possibility that heredity may play an important role among the factors which predispose to tuberculosis. Thus in New York State in 1910<sup>7</sup> the tuberculosis mortality rate for natives of Ireland was more than five times as great as the rate for natives of Russia, most of whom, in this case, were Jews. However, even in these figures there is evidence of the influence of environment, because Jews living in various parts of New York City had markedly different tuberculosis death rates, varying from 83 per hundred thousand in an old congested district, to 52 in a newer and more open section. It is also significant that the rates of the New York City Irish were markedly higher than those for the Irish in their own country. We find similar differences between the white and colored population of those states which keep separate vital statistics for the two races.<sup>8</sup> Thus, in Pennsylvania, in 1921, the white death rate from tuberculosis

<sup>6</sup> Smith, F. C., *Tuberculosis: Its Predisposing Causes*, U. S. Pub. Health Bul. 38: 777-84. Also, Reprint 829.

<sup>7</sup> Dublin, L. I., *The Causes for the Recent Decline in Tuberculosis and the Outlook for the Future*, Nat. Tuberculosis Ass'n, 1923. Also, reprinted by Met. Life Ins. Co.

<sup>8</sup> Dublin, *op. cit.*, p. 9.



was 84 per hundred thousand, while the colored rate was 333. In the District of Columbia the white rate was 75, the negro rate 278. In Tennessee, the white rate was 107, the negro rate 282. While the rates for the two races are consistently divergent in a ratio of two or three to one, it should also be noted that the negro rate itself varies greatly from state to state. Thus, in Mississippi, it was 167 and in South Carolina 168, while in New York it was 322 and in Pennsylvania, 333. Since these states were all included in the registration area in 1921, we cannot assume that a difference in reporting is wholly or even largely responsible for these variations. It seems much more reasonable to suppose that congested living quarters in northern cities contribute to a negro mortality rate from tuberculosis which is practically double that found on the southern plantations.

Whatever may be decided ultimately concerning the influence of race on the incidence of tuberculosis, there seems to be little doubt that sex and age play important roles. In the Industrial Department of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, the tuberculosis death rate among white males for a ten-year period was 36 per cent higher than among white females.<sup>9</sup> But there is a still greater variation in the several age groups. The following table is based on the experience of five large insurance companies with an active, or premium-paying, membership in their industrial departments of 26,000,000 men, women and children in 1920. The difference between the mortality rates for males and females and for persons in different age groups is probably to be interpreted largely in terms of variations in exposure and in general physical conditions. Industrial fatigue is doubtless another factor; and there may possibly be an inherent difference in powers of resistance.

We have access to data which indicate that there is a marked geographical variation in mortality rates from tuberculosis. In 1917 the rate for cities in the registration area was 159 per 100,000, while in the rural areas it was

<sup>9</sup> Dublin, *op. cit.*, p. 12.

DEATH RATES PER 100,000 FROM TUBERCULOSIS  
Intercompany Industrial Mortality Experience, 1916 to 1920,  
By Age Periods <sup>10</sup>

Age Periods	Death Rates per 100,000	
	Tuberculosis, All Forms	Tuberculosis, of Lungs
All ages, one and over	154.5	139.9
1 to 4	62.0	16.3
5 to 9	22.3	8.2
10 to 14	27.1	18.9
15 to 19	125.4	115.2
20 to 24	218.5	207.7
25 to 34	249.3	238.7
35 to 44	271.7	259.0
45 to 54	235.6	222.9
55 to 64	196.4	183.5
65 to 74	174.4	160.6
75 and over	152.3	138.5

only 130.<sup>11</sup> In 1921 the rates in the various states of the registration area ranged from 37 in Nebraska to 185 in Colorado. Since, however, many of the deaths in Colorado were those of migratory consumptives, it is fairer to cite Delaware with its rate of 141. The fact that the rate in one state (Delaware) is four times as great as that in another state (Nebraska) whose populations are on the whole from similar stocks, is difficult to interpret otherwise than in terms of economic status, housing, working conditions, education and other environmental factors.

Another set of data indicate the influence of economic conditions. The Metropolitan Life Insurance Company has its work divided into three departments, which correspond approximately to the economic status of its policy holders. The industrial department deals with wage earners; the intermediate branch with a somewhat higher economic group; the ordinary department includes largely business

<sup>10</sup> *The Mortality Experience of Industrial Policy Holders*, p. 19.

<sup>11</sup> These figures and those which follow are derived from the paper by L. I. Dublin already referred to, except where otherwise noted.



and professional men. In 1921, the tuberculosis death rate for males between the ages of 15 and 74 was 157 in the industrial department, 109 in the intermediate branch and 68 in the ordinary department. It might be possible to argue that the lower rates in the higher economic classes are due to the fact that their members are drawn from the superior stocks, but evidence presented in the discussion of poverty should disabuse our minds of this supposition. The hypothesis that environment rather than heredity is dominant in the causation of tuberculosis stands out most vividly in the study of the occupations of patients. A study of England and Wales covering three years, 1910-12, showed the lowest rates among the farmers, railway men, and, interestingly, coal miners. Very high rates were found among tin miners, cutlers, file makers, stone masons, lead miners and bartenders. The general conclusion which it seems fair to draw from these figures is that the highest rates are found among those exposed to mineral and metallic dust, the next highest among those exposed to the use of alcohol.

A very interesting, and to the layman, surprising fact, is that tuberculosis among discharged soldiers is due practically not at all to gas. The breakdown of health by wounds, fatigue, exposure and other causes seem to have played a much more important role than gassing, to which has been popularly ascribed most of the tuberculosis among ex-service men.<sup>12</sup>

To summarize—tuberculosis is due jointly to infection and weakened defenses of the individual. Since practically everyone is exposed sooner or later to the infection, it seems plain that the decisive factor is power of resistance. This, in turn, seems to vary somewhat with race, and sex, but still more with age, economic status and occupation. In other words, persons most exposed to infection and living under conditions which would tend to break down health anyway are more likely to succumb to tuberculosis than those who are less exposed and whose living and working conditions are more wholesome.

<sup>12</sup> Fries, A. A., in *Nat. Tuberc. Ass'n*, 1922: 268.

**Medical-Social Treatment.**—The treatment for tuberculosis may be summarized as rest, fresh air and good food. More specifically, of course, it involves a great many different things which vary with the circumstances of the individual patient. We may illustrate the course of treatment by reviewing briefly the story of Christy Mathewson.<sup>13</sup> To begin with, there was some bungling in the process of securing an adequate diagnosis. One physician told him he had bronchial trouble, another called it a heavy cold, but a third discovered an afternoon temperature and had a sputum examination. The presence of the tubercle bacilli made it clear beyond a doubt that the husky baseball player was in an advanced stage of tuberculosis. Of course, he stopped playing ball at once, and went to the Adirondacks where he was soon admitted to a sanatorium in which he spent more than two years. We have already noted his care by Mrs. Mathewson, his checker playing and some other features of his treatment. In addition, he slept out of doors except when the weather was extremely cold,—then in an open room. The “absoluteness” of his rest is indicated by the fact that no motion was permitted except of the lower arm. One part of his treatment administered after a time was what is known as pneumothorax. “The method is to pump air between the walls of the pleura, which is the double sack that encases and protects the lung. This air forms a cushion that prevents the affected lung from breathing, thus forcing upon it absolute rest so that nature may have every possible opportunity to build new tissue over the tuberculous area.” At length his temperature became normal and he was allowed to sit up half an hour a day. Still later he was permitted to take one meal a day in the dining room, ride fifteen minutes, walk two minutes and otherwise advanced by very slow and gradual stages toward normal activity. But after he had been out of bed several months, there was a relapse and for a time his life was despaired of. The whole series of steps had to be gone through again and it was twenty-five months before he took his first trip out of the mountains. Even then he

<sup>13</sup> Survey, 51: 248 ff.



had to go slowly and take unusually good care of himself. Instead of returning to the playing of baseball, he became manager of one of the major league teams.

It is generally assumed that there are no medicines which will cure tuberculosis. "Nature heals and the patient helps by securing rest, fresh air, proper and sufficient food and by maintaining a sanguine and tranquil state of mind. . . . Not months, but years are usually required to bring about permanent arrest of the disease."<sup>14</sup> However, announcement has recently been made of some experiments by Danish physicians in which they believe they have found a specific which will cure tuberculosis.<sup>15</sup> But, pending confirmation by other scientists, there is nothing for a layman to do but suspend judgment and wait in hope.

It is, of course, tremendously important to discover cases of the disease while it is in an early stage of development. In order to find those in whom tuberculosis is developing, it is important to provide periodic medical examinations for practically everyone. By expanding the present scope of examinations of school children, they can rather easily be reached. Employers can make such examinations available to their workers. Insurance companies can see that all their policy holders are examined once a year. Others can be attracted to special clinics and a small number may be stimulated to seek examination upon their own initiative.

Sanatorium care is desirable for the great majority of patients. It removes them from the constant reminders that they are unable to do the things that well people engage in, and puts them among others who are sharing their own experiences. The sanatorium can more easily provide rest, proper food and fresh air than can most private homes. It is especially needed for patients who have difficulty in accommodating themselves to the life of invalids. The sanatorium has been well described as a school of life for the tuberculous. Its chief function is not medication, but education and supervision. It builds up self-discipline

<sup>14</sup> *Treatment and Training for the Tuberculous*, Fed. Bd. Voc. Educ., Bul. No. 29, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup> Emerson, Haven, in *Survey*, 53: 513-514.

and morale in ways that would be difficult elsewhere. One of its features, which has been developed in recent years, is diversional and occupational therapy, the purpose of which is primarily to keep the patient's mind filled with wholesome thoughts, but secondarily to prepare him for each succeeding step in the course of treatment. These sanatoria are located in all sections of the country, because it has been demonstrated that tuberculous people can and do get well in almost any climate. It is true that certain regions are more favorable than others, but it must not be forgotten that the food, rest, fresh air and hopeful attitude, so essential to recovery, are in no wise dependent upon climate, but may easily be sacrificed in the pursuit of a supposedly superior climate.

A very large number of consumptives are cared for more or less satisfactorily in their own homes. It has been demonstrated that arrangements can be made in the ordinary home for outdoor sleeping, for at least a measure of quiet and rest, and for protection against infection of the rest of the family. This has the advantage of keeping the patient near those who may be able and willing to do most for him, but it imposes a tremendous burden upon members of the family, both of work and of worry. Moreover, unless the instructions of physician and visiting nurse are strictly followed, it involves the danger of infection, as well as the probability that the patient himself will not make the progress he might in a sanatorium. There seem to be relatively few patients who would not be better off in a sanatorium, but because of limited facilities, it is quite necessary to provide home care of those who cannot be admitted to an institution.

**Vocational Readjustment.**—But a patient's troubles are by no means ended when his disease has been arrested and his health measurably restored. The transition from sanatorium to industry is often very difficult. Usually the discharged patient is not able to do full-time work without danger of a relapse. Sometimes the only trade he knows is that in which he acquired the disease; a return to it would obviously be hazardous. In many instances he is



deterred from explaining his condition and asking for needed concessions, because managers are afraid to employ a "lunger." Yet in most cases the man must find work; he has a family to support; idleness is demoralizing. So he frequently takes a job which is his undoing; within two years he has broken down again.<sup>16</sup>

To devise means of meeting the needs of convalescent consumptives a number of experiments have been undertaken.<sup>17</sup> One of these was the Reco Workshop for training tuberculous ex-service men, which was maintained for four years by the New York Tuberculosis Association. Here jewelry making, watch repairing and cabinet making were taught under medical supervision. Some of the difficulties encountered were the great change from the men's previous occupations, the necessity of a long training course and the consequent discouragement. Two-thirds of the men who started the courses left within six months, although the average time required for training was twenty-eight months.

A more successful venture is the Altro Workshop maintained by the Committee for the Care of the Jewish Tuberculous in New York City. This is a "sheltered shop" which utilizes needlework for "industrial convalescence." Each man or woman accepted for employment is examined by the Committee's physician, and a social worker visits the family. The sanatorium "graduate" is then told how many hours a day he may work, what food he should have and other details that go to make up his personal program. At first he may be able to work only a few hours a day, but his whole time is under the direction of the workshop. He has the benefit of rest rooms, baths and dining room. A nurse is on duty to see that physicians' directions are carried out and to give any needed advice or instruction.

The worker-patient is paid at a piece rate which is equal to the union scale. But in addition to the cash in his pay envelope he receives a check for the amount needed to bring

<sup>16</sup> Ross, Mary, in *Survey*, 53: 516-517.

<sup>17</sup> The summary presented here is based on the article just referred to: Ross, Mary, *After "San"*—*A Job*, *Survey*, 53: 516-519, 556.

the family income up to a level which the Committee regards as adequate. As the worker gains in strength and skill his cash wages increase and his check subsidy decreases. Within three years about two-thirds of the workers' families become entirely self-supporting and "graduate" from the workshop. "Relapses have been reduced from 50 per cent during the first year and a half to between 15 and 20 per cent in a period extending to six years from the patients' discharge from the sanatorium."

At the present time (1925) the New York Tuberculosis Association is in the midst of a three-year demonstration in vocational placement service. When sufficient data have been assembled, the association will make a comparative study of men whom it has placed and a "control group," composed of those who were examined by its physicians but did not take the jobs which it offered. It is expected that this study will shed some light on the possibilities and limitations of vocational guidance for workers who have had tuberculosis.

**Prevention.**—Because the cure of people who become well from tuberculosis requires a long, difficult and expensive course of treatment, it should be much cheaper and easier to keep people from ever getting the disease at all. We shall presently examine some of the evidence which indicates that the number of victims can be very greatly reduced and that eventually tuberculosis may be practically eliminated as an enemy of the human race. A program of prevention will have to include items of two general sorts, those which tend to prevent infection and those which tend to build up powers of resistance. Among the first will be the control of patients most likely to cause the infection of other persons. This, of course, must depend upon the early and accurate diagnosis and reporting of tuberculosis to public health officers. More or less isolation of the patient is necessary, preferably, in most cases, in a sanatorium. Along with the control of diseased persons, there is need of a number of laws and their enforcement with reference to spitting in public places, common use of towels and cups, pasteurization of milk, inspection of meat and



exclusion of carcasses in which gross tuberculosis lesions are found, the examination of persons engaged in the handling of food and exclusion of those found to be suffering from active tuberculosis.

The building up of defenses against tuberculosis is practically identical with the development of health and powers of resistance against all diseases. But here we are especially interested in such measures as the provision of open-air schools for children who are undernourished or exhibit other conditions which might predispose them to tuberculosis. Closely akin to the open air schools are the fresh air camps and "preventoria" used especially by children who display definite symptoms of tuberculosis, but who may not yet have the disease in an active form. Personal hygiene for all is being pushed by the National Tuberculosis Association through its Modern Health Crusade. Other movements for boys and girls also emphasize "health chores" and promote the establishment of habits conducive to personal health. What has come to be known as industrial hygiene is likewise important in this connection. By this we mean examination and advice to employes, prompt and adequate treatment of their minor ills and special provision for those with tuberculosis. The regulation of sanitary conditions in work places is also important. Good housing is another preventive measure, for it has been found that tuberculosis usually appears more frequently where people are crowded together in dark, dirty and poorly ventilated tenements or hovels. A well-balanced program of recreation for all, while primarily serving other purposes, will likewise help to check tuberculosis. And last, but by no means least, improved economic status, by raising the general level of living, will enable people to provide themselves with the means of combating disease and building up their personal health.

Among the various agencies which are devoted to the control of tuberculosis, one stands out particularly. It is the National Tuberculosis Association. This organization is made up of state and local societies and about 3,500 individual members over the country. Its activities include

scientific research, the holding of an annual meeting, publication of the transactions of that meeting and of two journals, the carrying on of educational and publicity work in a great variety of ways, advisory service to various public and private agencies dealing with tuberculosis, the Modern Health Crusade (a program for school children), motion pictures, health games, and educational lectures by a health clown. Funds are raised largely through an annual sale of tuberculosis seals which serves also as a form of publicity and popular education.

**The Declining Death Rate.**—Evidence that tuberculosis can be controlled appears in the decline in death rate from this disease. In Massachusetts, where figures are available over a longer period of time than in any other American state, the death rate from pulmonary tuberculosis was 395 per 100,000 of the population in 1857. From that time until the present there has been a fairly steady decline, although with some irregularities, so that the rate in 1921 was only 84.<sup>18</sup> Data covering a shorter period of time are available from the original registration states and the District of Columbia. The death rate from all forms of tuberculosis in the registration area was 195 per 100,000 in 1900. It fell with some irregularities to 94 in 1921.<sup>19</sup> In the Industrial Department of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, the death rate from all forms of tuberculosis fell steadily from 225 in 1911 to 114 in 1922, the greatest reduction in this decade being for white males between the ages of 35 and 44 whose mortality was cut 64 per cent.<sup>20</sup> The composite death rate from tuberculosis per 100,000 insured persons in the five companies previously referred to fell from 170 in 1916 to 125 in 1920.<sup>21</sup> European experience has not been so favorable during the past few years, because the War both increased opportunities for infection and greatly decreased the vitality of the population. Even so, however, the death rates from

<sup>18</sup> Britten, R. H., and Sydenstricker, Edgar, U. S. Pub. Health Rep., 37: 2843-2858. Reprint No. 799.

<sup>19</sup> Dublin, *op. cit.*, p. 2.

<sup>20</sup> Dublin, *op. cit.*, pp. 4, 22.

<sup>21</sup> *Mortality Experience of Industrial Policyholders*, p. 25.



tuberculosis in England and Wales have been lower than those in the United States except in the years 1916, 1917 and 1918.<sup>22</sup>

The part that the economic and political systems may play in the control of tuberculosis is suggested by the experience of Germany. Economic prosperity and international peace combined with the public health program to reduce the tuberculosis death rate from 219 per hundred thousand in 1899 to 142 in 1914. War conditions drove the rate up to 212 in 1919, but in 1921 it dropped again to 148. The financial crash, extended unemployment, housing and food shortages were followed in 1923 by a rate of 160.<sup>23</sup>

Britten and Sydenstricker concluded that we have temporarily reached a low point in mortality from pulmonary tuberculosis in the United States, and that the rapid decline of recent years will probably stop and possibly even give way to an actual increase. Dublin, however, believes that the tuberculosis death rate in the United States will be not far from 50 in the year 1930. He is encouraged in this belief by the fact that three states in 1921 had rates below 50 and that the rates in New Zealand and Australia were also less than 50. "It may even be lower, provided an effort is made during the next years to apply the lessons of our experience with this disease during the last twenty or thirty years."

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write the story of someone you know who has, or has had, tuberculosis; note background and probable causes, social and economic problems, course of the disease, treatment and outcome.
2. Acquaint yourself with measures being taken in your home district and state to discover people who have tuberculosis or are in danger of it. Note examination of school children, industrial workers, insured persons, attendance on clinics.
3. Visit a tuberculosis sanatorium and report according to the schedules outlined in previous chapters for other types of institutions.

<sup>22</sup> Britten and Sydenstricker, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

<sup>23</sup> Emerson, Haven, in *Survey*, 53: 577.

4. Visit an "open-air" school and report on equipment, curriculum, daily schedule, admission and dismissal of pupils.
5. Write abstracts of laws of your state pertaining to tuberculosis.

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## CHAPTER XXII

### DISEASES OF THE HEART

Until very recently diseases of the heart have not been thought of as affecting any large number of people nor as involving problems of social adjustment. It was rather generally assumed that heart disease came suddenly to a few, usually advanced in years; that death followed shortly and that there was nothing in particular to be done about it. But now there is abundant evidence to show that the victims of cardiac disorders (diseases of the heart) are very numerous, that many of them are children, that the course of the disease is usually long, and that there are many and varied social adjustments to be made on behalf of the patients.

#### ALBERT MARGIN<sup>1</sup>

*Albert Margin* first came into the hands of a social agency when he was referred to the Department of Social Work in a large public hospital where he was a patient for a serious heart condition. The medical diagnosis was "Adams Stokes disease, chronic myocarditis and myocardial insufficiency." The doctor in charge of his case had discovered that the man was worried about his family. Since the patient would have to be in the ward for an indefinite period, a social worker was asked to look into his home situation, and if possible relieve the man's anxiety so that he might improve more readily. The doctors believed that Mr. Margin would probably never be able to work again but that with proper bed care, he would live for five or six years.

The family consisted of:

<sup>1</sup> This summary was prepared by a case worker in the social service department of a hospital in a large city.



*Albert*, the patient and husband, who was, at the time he came to us, thirty-eight years of age. He had been born in a small town in Massachusetts about thirty miles from Boston having come from a good type of French-Canadian family. He had received an elementary education in the local schools and since then had worked in a shoe factory. Because of strikes and unstable employment conditions during the past two years he had worked as a painter in a carriage shop. Prior to his marriage, which occurred twelve years ago, he had been a "wild" youth, losing most of his money by gambling and even requiring his mother to help him out on several occasions. No one, however, believed that he had ever been "immoral," and his brother who had had a "grudge against him for gambling" said he had never seen him under the influence of liquor. The social worker found him an agreeable young man, co-operative with the doctors, and apparently grateful for all that was done for him and his family. Although wild and irresponsible in his youth, he had since marriage tried to meet his obligations like a man.

*Marion*, the wife, was thirty-five years of age and the daughter of a French-American family of rather inferior quality. She had received an elementary school education and gone to work in a shoe factory where she had been employed until the time of her marriage which occurred at the age of twenty-three. Her general health had always been good. At this time she was four months pregnant. She cerebrated slowly and it took a great while to show her the "reason for anything." She was also an exceedingly poor housekeeper but in spite of this kept herself and the children fairly clean. Her general appearance was that of a dull, unattractive young woman of very limited ability.

*Children*.—There were four children: Ruth 11, Albert 8, Mary 6, and Jane 2. It would be difficult to find four more attractive, healthy, and alert children than these. Ruth and Albert had good school records, and were beloved by their teachers; while Mary and Jane were still at home and the delight of their grandparents.

*The husband's relatives*.—The only paternal relative at

this time was the patient's brother, Arthur, who was a dependable, intelligent man a few years the patient's senior. The father had died when the boys were small, and the mother who had had a few thousand dollars, did her best by the boys. The patient, however, went wild for a few years, and demanded his mother's savings to get him out of gambling losses. This Arthur had keenly resented, not only on the grounds of immediate injustice to his mother, but because in her declining years she had suffered two years of invalidism requiring the services of a nursing attendant, and he himself had had to bear this financial burden alone. This situation had created a bitter feeling between the brothers and they had not spoken for several years, though they had lived in towns not more than thirty miles apart. Later the brother married this trained attendant who was apparently a very good house-wife. They had no children, but established and maintained an attractive and well-furnished home.

*The wife's relatives* included her parents who lived in a two-room shack built in the midst of under-brush and shrubs which skirted the village in which the Margin family lived. Living at home with the parents were four younger brothers and sisters ranging from a girl of 19 to a boy of 12. The old man had been a factory worker, in normal times earning a living wage, though he had no savings. During the present depression he had been laid off, and for weeks had looked in vain for work. The only wage earner in this group was the 17-year-old boy.

The patient's social situation when encountered in the hospital was as follows: Four months previously he had complained of not feeling well and had consulted the family doctor who had told the patient he had "indigestion and stomach trouble." He had not been able to work at all regularly since, but his wife believed he was getting lazy and that there was no physical reason why he should not go back to his job. The family had never been able to save much, and what little there was had been exhausted during the weeks preceding hospitalization.

Shortly before his admission to the hospital, Albert



Margin and his family had gone to live in a tent on land belonging to his father-in-law, and the household equipment had been stored. During these few autumn weeks the four children had been cared for by their maternal grandparents. But by this time they were positively unable to help longer.

When the situation was brought to the attention of the patient's brother he laid aside the old grudge. For the sake of the four children, whom he recognized as "above the average," and of the stupid wife, for whom he was sorry, though somewhat disgusted with her, he helped to find a tenement and get the family settled. He put in several loads of wood and paid the first two months' rent. In the meantime aid had also been secured from the town. When this was accomplished and reported to the patient, his worries were greatly reduced, and with the hospital regime he improved considerably, although he was "too chronic" to expect a "cure." After two months of ward care he was sent home with careful directions about rest, and emphasis on keeping free from worry.

Shortly after returning to his home he was visited and found sitting beside the stove, almost paralyzed with cold. There was so little fire that a pail of water beside the stove was frozen, and his wife was trying to cook with a few little pieces of green wood. She had nagged Albert continually since his return and had urged him to attempt work. But in spite of this he joined her in protesting the proposal that he go to his brother's home. He was really attached to his wife and hated to leave the children. However, he was persuaded and went to stay with his brother, Arthur, with whom he received excellent care. Later his heart became suddenly worse and he was readmitted to the hospital. After more weeks of hospital care the man was discharged to his brother's home where he will stay indefinitely. He sees his family often and is as happy as a cardiac cripple probably ever is.

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In spite of Albert Margin's low earning power, his

limited education and his wife's "inherent lack of teachability," this was the first time he had had to ask for outside help since his marriage. But the heart disease had gradually brought about a crisis which the family was unable to meet alone. Not only did income cease, savings vanish and expenses mount; there were intimate personal adjustments to be made. To begin with, the wife did not appreciate the seriousness of her husband's condition. This was due, not only to her lack of intelligence, but to the fact that external appearances gave little indication of Albert's really crippled condition. One of the social worker's tasks, then, was to try to make Marion understand that her husband was thoroughly incapacitated for work. Another, closely related task was to change her habit of constant nagging, which had serious physical consequences for Albert. A third social adjustment involved arranging for the comfort of the family and assuring the patient that there was no need for worry on that account. The problems of this family can hardly be regarded as solved, but an accommodation has been brought about which bids fair to last as long as the man lives.

**Unadjustments Which Accompany.**—Knowledge of the fact that they have defective hearts brings forth quite different attitudes in different people. Some become "prisoners of fear," over-sensitive to their surroundings, and constantly worrying about their condition. They display a tendency to excessive introspection and "moodiness." Some are inert and lack initiative. They are over-cautious. Often this is due to the sheltered life and the restrictions made necessary by their handicap. Others seem never to be able to face the fact of their limitations, refuse to reorganize their mode of living and eventually pay the penalty.

The question of whether a cardiac patient should marry is of importance, especially in the case of a woman. It is not a matter of heredity so far as we are aware, but of ability to meet the obligations of married life. "If marriage is to bring increasing anxieties and added physical burdens to a patient who is barely holding her own under



the protection of her parents, the venture is probably unwise. If it is likely to bring added comfort and less physical and mental strain, the verdict might be reversed."<sup>2</sup> This is not simply a question of "to marry or not to marry." There are numerous complicating factors to be taken into account. First of all, enforced celibacy may seriously affect the physical and mental health of the cardiac cripple herself (or himself). There is likely to be already a sense of inferiority, deprivation and exclusion. When to this is added repression of the sex impulses the health hazards may be greatly increased. Second, assuming that marriage is entered upon, there is the further question as to the wisdom of pregnancy.

This last problem is perhaps the most difficult of all. A physician may advise in a given case that pregnancy is unsafe. But celibacy within marriage may be more disturbing to one's emotional make-up than celibacy outside of marriage; and this may be true of either the man or the woman or both. Shall the patient and her husband refrain from intercourse? Shall they use contraceptives? Or shall the woman's life be risked against the advice of her physician? But rarely is there "free choice" of these alternatives. The couple, or one of them, may belong to a religious sect which frowns upon birth control. What shall they do? Evidently it is not easy to effect such an adjustment of relationships between husband and wife as not only to avert child-bearing, but also to guard against emotional upheavals which so often follow upon interference with the sex life.

Indeed, there are many problems which have to be faced by the cardiac "housewife," whether she be married or not. Woman's work in the household is often heavy, imposing both physical and mental strain. It is difficult to make the work easier and hard to make some women give it up. But when a heart disease appears, a change must be made; and to change working and living conditions for the housewife it may be necessary to change the living arrangements of the entire family. These adjustments may

<sup>2</sup> Hart, T. S., *Taking Care of Your Heart*, p. 67.

include sending children away so as to give the mother a partial rest, sending her on a vacation, seeing that she has fewer stairs to climb, sending out the washing, hiring help in the home, securing better paid work for the husband so that he can pay for these added necessities. If the woman is a wage-earner herself, it may be necessary to provide light home work to take the place of outside employment. In general, heart disease in the housewife calls for a reorganization of her own scheme of life and often for a reorganization of the life of the whole family.

For the workman with a heart disease one of the hardest trials is likely to be giving up a trade with which he is familiar and in which he takes pride. Along with it will probably go the loss of congenial associates. He may have to seek new employment among strangers and accept a job in which he has little interest beyond the earning of his living. If he is an older man, he may have to give up a skilled trade and try some form of unskilled labor. If he is younger, there is the problem of securing training for a new vocation in which he can take pleasure and through which he can earn a respectable income as well as guard against overstraining his heart. Besides these vocational adjustments, the worker may have to give up active participation in trade union or other group life. When working hours are over he may have to go home and rest instead of romping with the children, attending the movies or talking politics with the neighbors. All this may produce a sense of futility and inferiority. If so, demoralization has begun.

When the patient is a child, there is the same problem that adults face of learning what to do and what to avoid. There is the equally difficult problem of bringing it to pass that others may understand his limitations. Some people seem to regard heart disease as an imaginary affliction "adopted as an excuse to get out of doing one's honest share of the day's work." Others go to the opposite extreme, become sentimental over the "poor little sufferer" and fret lest he overdo. Either attitude is bound to react unfavorably upon the child. The first may make him into



a discouraged little introvert; the second may render him egocentric, selfish, demanding more and more attention, enjoying exaggerated pity. Heart disease may reduce the educational opportunities of children in two ways; first, by the family's excessive fear that school attendance may involve overstrain and hence ready acquiescence in the child's desire to stay away; second, by absences due to actual physical incapacity. This is a very serious matter, for the cardiac patient cannot depend on brute strength to make his way in the world. He must make special adjustments; he must find opportunities for work and recreation which conform to his capacity for physical exertion. Hence he needs education quite as much, if not more, than the average healthy child.

The economic aspect of heart disease has been well summarized in the following words. "Diphtheria is a matter of days; typhoid of weeks; tuberculosis of years—heart disease may run for decades. No other diseases (except perhaps some of the mind) handicap their victims for self-support so persistently and so long as those of the heart. The task before us is not merely to keep the cardiacs alive, but to help them walk the narrow path between dependence and overexertion; to find work that will mean self-support and the meeting of family responsibilities without jeopardizing the wage-earner's dearly won hold on life."<sup>3</sup>

**Who Have Heart Diseases.**—In New York City in 1880 only about 80 persons in every 100,000 were reported to have died from heart disease. At the same time the tuberculosis mortality rate was over 350. By 1912 the latter had fallen and the former had risen until the death rates for the two diseases were the same (approximately 175 per 100,000). In 1923 the death rate from tuberculosis had fallen to less than 90, while the death rate from heart diseases was rapidly approaching 250.<sup>4</sup> Corresponding, though less extreme, changes appear in the mortality statistics from the United States registration area. The fol-

<sup>3</sup> Survey, 53: 123.

<sup>4</sup> Emerson, Haven, in Survey, 53: 117.

lowing table shows the relation of heart diseases to other outstanding causes of death in 1922.

# DEATHS IN THE UNITED STATES REGISTRATION AREA <sup>5</sup>

*During 1922*

	<i>At All Ages</i>		<i>At 40 Years of Age and Over</i>	
	Number	Percentage of all Causes	Number	Percentage of all Causes
All deaths .....	1,047,402	100.00	628,947	100.00
Heart diseases .....	134,184	12.8	120,965	19.2
Kidney diseases .....	78,412	7.5	69,698	11.1
Cancer .....	78,355	7.5	72,411	11.5
Cerebral hemorrhage and apoplexy .....	76,538	7.3	74,112	11.8
Pulmonary tuberculosis .	75,905	7.2	29,112	4.6
Lobar pneumonia .....	45,171	4.3	26,153	4.2

Turning from the mortality (number of deaths) to the morbidity (number of persons suffering from heart diseases), we find evidence that an estimate of 2,000,000 is conservative.<sup>6</sup> Over 2 per cent of the applicants for life insurance are rejected on account of heart disease. Two hundred thousand of the 5,000,000 drafted men who were examined for military service were rejected because of defective hearts. A survey in New York covering about 130,000 school children showed that 0.7 per cent had heart disease. "Ten per cent of the total bed capacity of our general hospitals is used year in and year out for the care of patients with heart disease. Twenty-five per cent of all visits to our city dispensaries are made by heart patients."

Who are these "cardiacs"? They represent a cross section of life as typical as any that could be taken anywhere else. There are men, women and children, young and old, manual laborers and clerks, society women and laundresses.

<sup>5</sup> Emerson, Haven, in Survey, 53:114.

<sup>6</sup> Data in this paragraph are based on: Hart, T. S., *Taking Care of Your Heart*, pp. 2-3; Emerson, Haven, *Heart Disease*, Survey, 53:113-118; *Salvaged Hearts*, Survey, 51: 391-392.



Whether there are significant differences in the incidence of heart disease among the members of different races we do not know. But in general these maladies appear to be no respecters of persons.

**What are Diseases of the Heart?**—This is in no sense a medical treatise; yet it seems necessary, in view of the almost universal ignorance of cardiac diseases, to present a brief statement of the nature, symptoms and prognosis of certain conditions which interfere with the function of the heart. In general, these defects may be classified as organic and functional. The organic or structural injuries to the heart are further classified as: (1) changes in size, (2) damaged valves, (3) damaged arteries, (4) damaged muscle, (5) damaged pericardium (the sack which encases the heart), (6) congenital defects.<sup>7</sup> By functional changes are meant disturbances of the heart's action for which no corresponding structural change has been discovered. These functional disorders are made manifest through such symptoms as rapid changes in rate and rhythm, shortness of breath, etc. Some writers call these "heart protests" rather than evidence of heart diseases.

Among the symptoms of heart trouble are consciousness of heart action, pain in the region of the heart, shortness of breath, swelling of the ankles, fainting spells, and nausea. Physicians remind us, however, that any of these symptoms may be produced by conditions quite outside of the heart.

It is also important to remember that the development of these heart defects may be very gradual and that the course of the disease, while extremely variable, is always more or less prolonged. "Sudden death, from heart disease is, contrary to the popular conception, an uncommon event." Heart disease need not mean life-long invalidism, in the commonly accepted sense of the word, but it does call for extended medical supervision and numerous social adjustments.

The interesting and hopeful thing about it all is that a cardiac patient may often, by proper attention to his bodily

<sup>7</sup> Hart, T. S., *Taking Care of Your Heart*, Chap. III.

needs, outdistance his sound-bodied neighbors and continue busy and happy for years. We seem to have here an application of the old adage, "The way to live to a ripe old age is to get an incurable disease and take care of it."

**Causes, Direct and Indirect.**—The conditions leading up to defective hearts or directly involved in them may be classified as follows:<sup>8</sup> (1) congenital defects, (2) diseases of childhood, (3) acute diseases of adult life, (4) chronic diseases of adult life, (5) focal infections, (6) intoxications or poisonings, (7) faulty habits, (8) emotional strain. Needless to say, more than one of these may appear in the same individual.

By congenital defects are meant "a failure by nature to develop properly the valves and orifices of the heart or the partitions between the walls of its chambers." Among the diseases of childhood which may affect the heart adversely are convulsions, rheumatic fever (frequently called "growing pains"), chorea (commonly known as St. Vitus' dance), whooping cough, measles, diphtheria, and scarlet fever. Among the acute diseases of adult life which menace the heart are pneumonia, typhoid fever, acute rheumatic fever and influenza. In both sets of diseases named the trouble is likely to arise out of failure to extend the period of convalescence until there is no longer danger of throwing an excessive burden on the heart. Among the protracted diseases which may involve the heart in difficulty, syphilis is probably the most serious. Others are gonorrhea, tuberculosis, diabetes and undernourishment. The most important of the focal infections are connected with the teeth and the tonsils. Intoxications or poisonings may be produced by alcohol, tobacco, tea, coffee or "headache powders." The precise influence of each of these is by no means clear. Some people seem to use them with impunity, while others are upset by slight indulgence. Excessive use is, however, known to be harmful to anyone, and for those with weak hearts even moderate use may be injurious.

<sup>8</sup> This classification is based on: Hart, *op. cit.*, Chap. IV; Smith, S. C., *How Is Your Heart?* Chaps. IV-VII; Babcock, R. H., *Your Heart and How to Take Care of It*, Chap. VI-VII.



The faulty habits which may help to bring on a diseased condition of the heart include overeating, sleeping too little, abuse and disuse of exercise and failing to get plenty of fresh air. The emotional strains usually involve worry, grief, shock, homesickness, irksome duties or domestic friction. Dr. Smith has pointed out that the term "broken heart" is not necessarily a figure of speech.

**Medical-Social Treatment.**—The first step in treatment, it should be obvious, is diagnosis. But we may well be warned against self-diagnosis. Only a well-trained physician is capable of determining with anything approaching accuracy what the real condition of one's heart may be. The earlier the trouble is discovered, of course, the better the opportunities for its control.

For practical purposes it has been found helpful to classify heart patients in accordance with their capacity for work. Such a classification is the following.<sup>9</sup>

Class I. Patients with organic heart disease who are able to carry on their habitual physical activity.

Class II. Patients with organic heart disease who are able to carry on diminished physical activity; (A) slightly decreased; (B) greatly decreased.

Class III. Patients with organic heart disease who are unable to carry on any physical activity.

Class IV. Patients with possible heart disease. Patients who have abnormal signs in the heart, but in whom the general picture, or character of the physical signs leads us to believe that they do not originate from cardiac disease.

Class V. Patients with potential heart disease. Patients who do not have any suggestion of cardiac disease, but who are suffering from an infectious condition which may be accompanied by such disease; e.g., rheumatic fever, tonsillitis, chorea, syphilis.

With most cardiac patients medication plays a very minor role. Treatment consists primarily in education in appropriate habits of living and assistance in making needed adjustments. The important part played by the patient's own habits and attitudes is suggested in some of the advice given by physicians.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Survey, 53: 140.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, S. C., *op. cit.*, pp. 138-142.

Find out how much exertion can be undertaken without distress—then live within the margin of safety.

Above all do not advertise your malady. It breeds the curse of introspection.

Do not become a recluse. . . . One has only to find a new, absorbing interest in order to find a new motive for living.

Contentions of any kind—fussing, arguing and quarreling—can in a few brief minutes scatter to the winds the hard-won benefits of weeks of heart care.

For a working man whose heart is defective one of the most important parts of his treatment consists in the making of vocational adjustments. Among the elements to be considered in helping a cardiac wage-earner are these. The work must be moderately light, with frequent climbing of stairs, running of errands, lifting, etc., eliminated. The strain from continual stooping, standing all day, reaching repeatedly overhead, working foot-treads, etc., is to be avoided. Opportunity is needed for relaxation in daily rest-periods and at other times. Whenever it can be continued, contact with former associates is likely to be an asset in developing and maintaining wholesome attitudes in the patient. Finally, it is important to help the man find work that he can do well and enjoy. Sometimes these vocational adjustments involve changes in the present job; sometimes they require a complete change of trade.

The domestic adjustments which are necessary for the cardiac housewife have already been suggested—taking a vacation and having someone else care for the children, sending out washing, employing help, dividing up her work among the other members of the family, etc. Corresponding arrangements may be needed for children.

In New York City teachers are instructed by the Board of Education: (1) to issue special passes to permit pupils with heart-disease to use special entrances and exits; (2) to permit these children to enter or leave school directly before or after the regular time-schedule for normal children; (3) to excuse cardiacs from physical training, fire drills, etc.; (4) to lengthen the lunch-hour in order to avoid hurry and haste in eating; (5) to revise the individual regimen upon the receipt of a report from the home physician.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Hart, *op. cit.*, p. 59.



All this assumes that the children who have heart diseases have been discovered and are under supervision. These, in turn, depend on the existence of adequate facilities for medical examination in the schools and special cardiac clinics. For some children, as for some adults, hospital care may be needed for a time. Often hospitalization needs to be followed by a stay in a convalescent home. Then for the children who must reckon with a life-long handicap there is need of special classes.

During the past few years heart clinics have been established in various cities until the number is now over 140. In these clinics physicians and social workers seek to understand, advise and supervise men, women and children who have defective hearts. Through medical and social diagnosis, explanation of the patient's condition to himself, his family and his employer or teacher, instruction as to what he may and may not wisely undertake, cultivation of wholesome attitudes, and occasionally medication or financial assistance, they try to help their patients live useful and happy lives in spite of their handicap. All this work is being promoted throughout the country by a national organization known as the American Heart Association.

### **Prevention of Heart Disease and Social Maladjustment.**

—As in all other situations which we have discussed in this book, prevention requires the elimination of fundamental causes. Now among the causal factors which we have found involved in diseases of the heart the congenital defects alone seem not to be subject to control. Many of the diseases of childhood can be checked by isolation or by the use of specific preventive measures such as antitoxin for diphtheria. The same is true of many of the diseases of adult life. Focal infections can be removed. Intoxications and poisonings can be stopped by moderating or ceasing the use of certain beverages and drugs. With someone to guide, encourage and remind, faulty habits can be changed and emotional strain reduced. All in all, we may say that the prevention of heart diseases involves just such a program of hygiene and sanitation as will tend to protect us

against a host of other diseases, promote health and extend life.

The prevention of the serious maladjustments which may accompany cardiac disorders will, of course, go along with prevention of the diseases themselves. But even when they appear, it should be increasingly possible to obviate social and personal difficulties through the early discovery and thorough understanding of the handicaps involved, the adoption of and persevering adherence to a carefully thought-out plan. Such a program is indeed social, for it requires the close cooperation of physician, patient and family, and sometimes of employer or teacher. It calls for the restriction of physical activity without social isolation. It demands a mitigation of the competitive struggle without destroying the joys of creative workmanship.

The prevention of heart diseases and their accompanying social maladjustments calls "not for a specific or a vaccine, not for an edict of the health department or a masterful piece of engineering, but for a relearning of nature's lessons, a steady pressure against infections and the habitual poisons and physical unfitness; treatment requiring that exhibition of courage, patience, self-denial which goes to the building of character."<sup>12</sup>

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write the story of a personal acquaintance who has a disease of the heart, noting probable causes, care and treatment, personal readjustments, outlook.
2. Find what facilities are available in your home district for the discovery and treatment of cases of heart disease. What additional facilities seem to be needed?
3. Secure statistics concerning the mortality from diseases of the heart in your home district and state. How do they compare with data on mortality from other causes? With data from other districts and states?
4. Interview employers, teachers, private physicians and public health workers to learn their attitudes toward heart diseases. Note especially indifference, fear, constructive suggestions.

<sup>12</sup> Emerson, Haven, in *Survey*, 53:118.



5. Visit a heart clinic and report in accordance with schedules outlined in previous chapters.
6. Visit a special class for cardiac children and report in similar fashion.

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## CHAPTER XXIII

### THE CRIPPLED AND DISABLED

It will be recalled that the Mead children <sup>1</sup> had a crippled uncle who lived with them for some time. More detailed information about his disability is presented here.

#### ANDREW MEAD

*Andrew*, the crippled brother, was ten years younger than John. Their mother had died when he was quite small and he had lived with his brother ever since, or with his sister, Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Mead did not like him, regarded him as a dependent, and would not allow the children to call him "Uncle Andrew." About 8 years ago he was injured while "hopping" a train. Since then he had been more or less of a physical wreck. He had a fractured hip, kidney trouble and a painful spine. A thorough medical examination indicated that his condition would get worse unless he underwent a rather serious operation and then kept his hip in a cast for six months. This Andrew consented to do.

In the meantime he was cooking and doing the housework, picking up odd jobs and trying in every way possible to help his brother and the children. In contrast with John he had finished the grade school and was fairly well read. He was bright, unselfish, frank, sensitive and showed a fine spirit of cooperation with the Family Welfare Society. But before arrangements could be made for his operation he became very much depressed and attempted suicide. (It later appeared that this was his second attempt.) He had been worried over his operation and the feeling that his

<sup>1</sup> See Chap. V.



life was worthless. He had had an argument with his brother Robert (now also living in the city) and after returning home had a dispute with Jennie, the oldest girl. He kept the light burning late in order to read. This kept Jennie from sleeping and awakened her father who "had some words" with Andrew. It seems also that Andrew had been drinking Jamaica Ginger. About 2:30 A.M. he slashed his throat with a razor and then phoned to Robert to come and see him before he died. Robert hurried over in his machine and rushed Andrew to the City Hospital where the gash in his neck was sewed up. Then he struggled to get away, but Robert called the police who locked him in the Mental Ward. Here he stayed two days and then was moved to another ward, where he proved so obstreperous that he was taken to the police station. He said he remained standing in a crowded cell 24 hours and was boiling with rage against the doctor. An officer finally phoned to Robert who came and took Andrew away. Andrew swore that never again would he try to commit suicide; that he wanted to live and was ready to go ahead with the operation on his hip.

He did go to the hospital; the operation was a success and after six months in the cast he returned to his brother's home. Still he did not gain his strength as rapidly as he hoped. It was found that he had diseased tonsils and abscessed teeth, which were then removed. For a time he helped his brother run a rooming house. But all did not go smoothly yet. He stole \$40 from John—money intended for the rent—and got "gloriously" drunk. Also he collected from the roomers and borrowed wherever he could, buying whisky and again threatening to commit suicide. But he repented again, securing a position through the State Rehabilitation Agent, which he presently lost, and then held a series of short time jobs. He telephoned a social worker one day asking for his home address; said he was down town and could not remember where he lived. About this time he accused Jennie of being pregnant, which was later proved to be untrue. All in all, Andrew's signs of mental disturbance indicate that he may

very likely require institutional care. After living for another year with his brother John, Andrew went back to his other relatives in the South.

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The story of Andrew Mead presents a number of typical problems: first, how to prevent such recklessness as is involved in jumping on and off moving vehicles; second, how to provide needed medical and surgical treatment for disabled persons of small means; third, how to maintain or restore the morale of an injured person; fourth, how to find a suitable place in industry for the permanently partially disabled man. The case summary in Chapter V should be re-read in this connection in order to see Andrew's experiences in the family setting. The story of the Jaroslav family, which follows, presents some of the problems of crippled children. In both cases treatment involved the cooperation of members of three professions, medicine, education and social case work. Andrew's problems were those of physical rehabilitation, vocational guidance and education, and above all, the restoration of wholesome attitudes. The problems of the Jaroslav children were those of physical development, education and guidance both general and vocational, and especially an accommodation of the ways of their Slovene parents and those of their American neighbors.

#### THE JAROSLAV FAMILY <sup>2</sup>

The story of the Jaroslav family is an excellent illustration of how little light the first request of a "client" may shed on his more serious needs. About two years ago there came to the office of a Family Welfare Society a Slovene, named Jaroslav, asking assistance with the rent because he was out of work. Starting with the man's unemployment the social workers discovered serious health problems among his children, the solution of which was seriously handicapped by his own and his wife's ignorance. Presently a

<sup>2</sup> Summary of a record in the files of a Family Welfare Society.



position as janitor of a church was found. It required the services of both Mr. and Mrs. Jaroslav, as a result of which the children were much neglected. Three of them were crippled and the oldest girl was a "conduct problem."

*Mr. Jaroslav* was born forty-five years ago in what was then part of the Austrian Empire. He and his wife came to America over twenty years ago and were married in this country. For twelve years Mr. Jaroslav worked as a coal miner. Then he was injured when the elevator cage fell to the bottom of the shaft. He never had been able to do any heavy work since that time. He later secured a well paid position with a cooperative grocery association as one of its managers. The managers of the association were elected by the members, and when Mr. Jaroslav's term of office expired he had to seek work elsewhere. He moved to another city but found no steady employment and went to selling papers. He and the oldest boy together earned only about \$1.00 a day. Their savings of \$300 were presently exhausted and Mr. Jaroslav was greatly worried.

He seemed to be thrifty and hard-working; he belonged to a Slovenian benefit society; he spoke English well, although with a foreign accent. Nominally he was a Catholic but did not attend church regularly nor send his children. He had some old-world ideas about children. For example, he disciplined his ten-year-old crippled son by making him kneel half an hour on his bare knees. Also when the oldest girl reached the age of fifteen he felt very strongly that she should go to work instead of continuing in school. He objected strenuously to plans made by social workers for his children, especially with reference to the open-air school. He considered this insinuation "that all his children had consumption" to be a grave insult.

*Mrs. Jaroslav*, ten years her husband's junior, seems to have been the silent partner in this family. For about a year she helped her husband in his janitor work since the church wanted the services of a man and wife. With the salary of \$150 a month they got along fairly well financially, but it is evident that the children suffered from lack of personal attention. Once when the visitor called, Mr.

Jaroslav and the children were standing around the room eating a lunch of bread and meat. When the man returned to work his wife came home for her lunch. The children had two quarts of milk a day but drank it only in coffee, which was a major item in their diet. Breakfast consisted regularly of coffee and bread. In accounting for the poor home conditions and very unsatisfactory food it is hard to tell how much to attribute to the mother's employment, how much to Slovene customs and how much to general ignorance. However that may have been, Mrs. Jaroslav found the double task of housekeeping and janitor work very hard and she became quite discouraged. Eventually arrangements had to be made for the husband to continue at the church without her assistance.

*Maria*, now seventeen years old, had a tubercular hip and walked with an exceedingly bad limp. Through hospital care this condition was improved, and later Maria was admitted to a Home for Crippled Children. While living there she attended Junior High School and finally completed the course. Before going to the hospital her father had made her sell papers on the street. At the Home Maria made a good deal of trouble. The matron reported that "she seemed to have no training whatever in little courtesies and table manners. She has also shown manifestations of being boy struck." She acted very foolishly in regard to the physician who attended her at the hospital. She was always wanting to call him on the phone and ask him to come out. She even went into hysterics, threatened to jump out of the window and screamed at the top of her voice because the matron would not allow her to call the doctor. The matron met this situation by opening the window and telling her to jump, at which Maria calmed down. Maria always had an offensive odor about her person and was suspected of having a venereal disease, but this was never verified. A school psychologist pronounced her of low mentality. However, this poor showing may have been due to undernourishment, some trouble with her eyes, and the generally unsatisfactory home conditions. Maria talked of taking a business course and becoming a stenog-



rapher, but was advised against this. In the summer following her completion of the Junior High School she got a job in a chili factory and went to live in a cheap rooming house. But in the fall she went to work as a domestic for a Slovenian family well known to the Jaroslavs. She seemed to get along well here, went to see her parents every Sunday and won their complete approval. They say she is a "good girl" now.

*Joseph*, now fifteen years old, was also in a crippled condition. He was able to walk only on crutches and with great difficulty. When examined at a dispensary his case was diagnosed as "progressive muscular atrophy." It was thought that he might live a year. However after some months in a hospital he was much improved and was able to wheel himself about in a little wagon.

*Rudolph*, now eleven years old, was the third crippled member of this family. He also appeared to be mentally defective. His condition was attributed to typhoid fever.

*Other Children.*—There were four other children ranging at the time of application from seven months to eleven years. None of these seemed to present any very serious difficulties, but all were undernourished and needed the attention of an intelligent mother, lest they become ill or delinquent or both.

*Services Rendered.*—It is interesting to note that this family received no material relief other than a loan of \$15 which was later returned. The principal service rendered was securing the janitor work for Mr. and Mrs. Jaroslav and later making adjustments between them and the sexton whom they found uncongenial. Many efforts were made to persuade the parents to put their children, all of whom were "T. B. suspects," into an open-air school. They finally yielded for a time, only to withdraw the children on some slight pretext. The purpose of the open-air school was clearly never made plain to Mr. and Mrs. Jaroslav.

However, they were induced to let Maria go to a hospital and later during convalescence to a private home outside the city. With much reluctance they allowed her to be taken to the Home for Crippled Children, but were not

satisfied until she settled back into ways familiar to their simple minds. The social case worker, visiting nurse and a prominent business man of their own nationality worked long and hard to educate the Jaroslavs in elementary principles of hygiene and dietetics, but it is doubtful if they have made much headway.

*Results and Prospects.*—Financially the Jaroslav family is getting along fairly well. By agreement with the church Mr. Jaroslav is continuing as janitor at \$120 a month and Mrs. Jaroslav is devoting her time to the home. The physical condition of Maria has been greatly improved, that of Joseph is somewhat better, but the health of the other children is not very different from what it was two years ago. Maria seems to be well adjusted for the present, but one may doubt whether her return to Slovenian ways will prove permanently satisfying. Both Mr. and Mrs. Jaroslav find great difficulty in understanding American customs; very likely they will never accommodate themselves to the folkways of this country. Meanwhile the health of the children hangs in the balance.

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**Numbers and Types of Disabled Persons.**—Of the two terms, crippled and disabled, the former is much more generally used than the latter, while the relative value of the two words is exactly reversed. Those who are crippled in the sense of being dismembered, constitute a minority of those who are disabled. The Division of Re-education of the Minnesota State Board of Control has defined a disabled person as "Any person who by reason of physical defect or deformity, whether congenital or acquired by accident, injury or disease is, or may be expected to be totally or partially incapacitated for remunerative occupation."<sup>3</sup> A committee in Cleveland felt that a definition so largely in terms of economic handicap was inadequate and extended its statement to include all persons "who are handicapped because they lack the normal use of skeleton or skeletal muscles."<sup>4</sup> The problems presented by disabled children

<sup>3</sup> Minnesota State Board of Control, Bul., May, 1923.

<sup>4</sup> *Survey of all the Cripples of Cleveland*, Ohio, in 1916, p. 13.



and disabled adults, while alike in many respects, differ in others. Most of the disabilities of the children arise from diseases which, if taken in time, can often be cured. With the adults, injuries are more frequently the results of accidents, and there is less possibility of cure. Both require medical and surgical attention. The child needs in addition, special provision for his education, while the adult frequently needs re-education. It should not be assumed, however, that all children are only temporarily disabled and all adults permanently incapacitated. These two classifications overlap. Among both adults and children are found those who may be expected to recover with little or no lasting handicap; and in both groups are those who by reason of congenital defects, amputations or paralysis will always be disabled.

We have no definite information as to the number of disabled persons in the United States, but from several studies which have been made it is possible to make estimates which are probably not far from the truth. A careful house-to-house canvass in Cleveland in 1916 revealed the presence of more than 4,000 so-called cripples. This gives a ratio of about 6 disabled persons to each thousand inhabitants. In a census taken in Massachusetts in 1905, more than 17,000 "lame, maimed and deformed" persons were found. This gives a ratio of 5.7 per thousand of the state's population. The close similarity of the figures from these two studies leads us to feel that an estimate for the entire United States may fairly safely be based on them. This would give us for the United States, 660,000 seriously disabled persons. At the fifth annual meeting of the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions, Mr. Dean <sup>5</sup> presented an estimate that the number of crippled and disabled in the United States is over 2,000,000 "of whom 600,000 have been so incapacitated as to be rendered occupationally useless." He went on to point out that "It would require an army of over 43,000,000 continuously in contact with the enemy for a year or of 4,000,000 for ten years to produce the number of industrial

<sup>5</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. No. 264, p. 201.

cripples unable to engage in their former occupations alive at this instant in the United States alone." The general manager of the National Safety Council estimated that during the nineteen months of our participation in the War when approximately 48,000 were killed or fatally wounded, no less than 126,000 men, women and children were killed in this country—35,000 in industry, 91,000 outside of industry. Of the latter, 25,000 were children.<sup>6</sup> If the ratio of disabled civilians to those disabled in war corresponds to the ratio of civilians and military deaths, then truly we are face to face with a most serious situation.

Some further information as to the nature and extent of these disabilities is offered by the report on a study in Birmingham, England, in 1911.<sup>7</sup> Of 1,000 disabled persons 16 years of age or over, it was found that one-fifth were able to go to work under ordinary conditions; one-seventh could attend a central workshop for the disabled; one-ninth could do remunerative work at home; but more than one-half were unable to do any remunerative work at all. Harris makes the following estimate of new cases of permanent disability in the United States each year.<sup>8</sup>

Loss of arm	810
Loss of hand	1310
Loss of leg or foot	1600
Loss of eye or sight	4980

#### PERMANENT IMPAIRMENT OF MORE THAN 50 PER CENT

Arm	930
Hand	3000
Leg	680
Foot	540
Eye	75

**Causes of Disability.**—Two studies of causation in groups of crippled children give us some notion of the sources of their disabilities. At the Spalding School in Chicago, the most frequent diagnoses were the following:

<sup>6</sup> Price, C. W., in *Lit. Dig.*, 65: 48-49, 1920.

<sup>7</sup> Ford, James, *Social Problems and Social Policy*, p. 487.

<sup>8</sup> Harris, G., *The Redemption of the Disabled*, pp. 289-290.



DIAGNOSIS OF CRIPPLED CHILDREN IN CHICAGO <sup>9</sup>

Diagnosis	Per cent
Infantile paralysis	42
Tuberculosis of bone	18
Spastic paralysis	10
Cardiac defects	10
Rickets	20
Amputations	
Congenital defects	
Osteomyelitis	
Arthritis	
Obstetrical paralysis	
Sleeping sickness	
Accidents, etc.	

A study of over 700 crippled children in Birmingham, England, in 1911, showed somewhat different results, as is indicated in the following table.

CAUSES OF PHYSICAL DISABILITY OF 721 CRIPPLED CHILDREN  
Birmingham, England, 1911 <sup>10</sup>

	Cripples	
	Number	Per cent
Tubercular disease .....	285	39.5
Infantile paraysis .....	175	24.3
Rickets .....	73	10.1
Congenital deformity .....	71	9.8
Apoplexy .....	33	4.6
Birth palsy .....	25	3.5
Accident .....	25	3.5
Scoliosis .....	13	1.8
Scattering .....	21	2.9
Total .....	721	100.0

We have no adequate statistics concerning causes of physical disability in adults, but must content ourselves with rather crude estimates. If the Cleveland figures are typical, one-third of the adult cripples have been disabled since childhood. Hence the causal factors revealed in the studies of children indicate what probably underlie one-half

<sup>9</sup> Neil, Jane A., in Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk., 1923: 385.

<sup>10</sup> Quoted by Ford, *op. cit.*, p. 486.

of all cases of physical disability. For the rest we shall find a large number accounted for in terms of industrial accidents. But an even larger number, perhaps two to three times as many, owe their condition to accidents outside of industry. Of these accidents a large proportion are bound up with the use of the automobile. It may not be far from the truth to estimate that of 600,000 permanently disabled persons in the United States, 300,000 represent the results of disease, 100,000 of industrial accidents and 200,000 of other accidents.<sup>11</sup> If this estimate be even approximately correct, it is evident that preventive work must be concentrated, first, on such diseases as infantile paralysis and tuberculosis, and second, on reckless driving and, third, on hazards in industry.

**Consequences of Physical Disability.**—In our discussion of industrial accidents we showed how physical disability may be followed by poverty, broken homes and personal demoralization. Further evidence of the economic handicap of disabled persons was obtained in a study made by the Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men.<sup>12</sup> For example, a switchman whose hands were amputated later became a machinist's helper. A baker who suffered the same misfortune was reduced to peddling pretzels. A driver who lost his arms became a watchman, and an engineer a helper in a storeroom. A longshoreman who lost his feet became an elevator operator. A coal heaver whose legs were cut off was reduced to peddling pencils. In a vast number of cases skilled men who are permanently disabled by some accident are reduced to the level of unskilled labor.

However, it is not necessary to assume that economic dependence is a necessary concomitant of physical disability. As in the case of Andrew Mead the problem of morale is frequently more serious than either that of physical condition or of income. "The common assumption that the

<sup>11</sup> This estimate is based on data already presented in this chapter, on reports of industrial accidents (Chap. XVIII) and on statistics of traffic accidents (Greenwood, Ernest, in Survey, 53: 317-319).

<sup>12</sup> Faries, John C., *The Economic Consequences of Physical Disability*.



cripple's industrial difficulties are insurmountable is his most serious handicap." <sup>13</sup> This handicap of unfortunate popular attitudes is most easily seen in the case of soldiers disabled in the recent War. They were frequently spoiled and demoralized by the adulation of friends and the public generally. They considered it oft-times beneath the dignity of a "hero" to get down to unheroic work. Some thought that when they had performed their war service they had done enough and that the nation owed them a living thereafter. Some feared that if they equipped themselves to earn more, their compensation would be cut. Some just couldn't get down to a matter-of-fact existence again.

The plight of the crippled child is quite as serious as that of the disabled adult. "One rarely sees a cripple playing, working, or studying with well children and enjoying himself, his handicap is too obvious. The cripple is made continually to feel this handicap and is apt to become selfish, self-centered, vindictive, and revengeful. Either that, or he learns to pander to his superiors in physique and very quickly finds that it is easier to be waited upon and to excite sympathy than it is to make the necessary effort for himself. The crippled boy without means is apt to grow up as an object of charity with a handful of pencils as an excuse for taking money." <sup>14</sup>

Thus physical disability combines with popular attitudes to produce warped personalities. Even when the immediate crisis (accident or disease) is successfully met, complete readjustment requires an extended period of time during which the personal hazards are very great. Continued inability to participate in school, industry and various social activities may produce a sense of futility and discouragement. Unwise expressions of "sympathy" by friends may induce self-pity. The expectation that a cripple will inevitably be economically dependent creates a role for him which he is very likely to accept. Thus the problems of the disabled are quite as truly social as physical.

<sup>13</sup> Richmond, Mary E., *Social Diagnosis*, p. 95.

<sup>14</sup> Fish, John E., *Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk.*, 1920: 225.

**Care and Training of Crippled Children.**—The first need of a crippled or otherwise disabled child is for a careful medical diagnosis. With this as a basis the next step is to work out a program which will combine medical and surgical treatment on the one hand with education on the other. The child may have to spend some time in a hospital and perhaps undergo a serious surgical operation. This, if successful, usually needs to be followed by convalescent care either in his own home or, preferably in many cases, in a specialized institution. In some cases there is follow-up work done by visiting nurses after discharge from the hospital or convalescent home. After a time he will probably be ready to proceed with his schooling. In some cases it is possible to combine this with the hospital and convalescent care, thus conserving both time and morale.

Some thirty cities in the United States have established special classes or schools for crippled children. These usually provide special seats, cots and blankets for rest periods, equipment for exercises and massage and sometimes for surgical dressings, facilities for the teaching of handwork, hot noon meals and milk at other hours. Transportation is the most expensive feature of these special classes and schools. There are frequently motor buses to take the children from home to school, to clinic, to museum and on varied outings. These schools undertake to combine physical development, academic or general education and prevocational or vocational training. The classes are usually small, much individual attention is given the pupils, and the children themselves seek to compensate for the things they cannot do by excelling in their studies. Consequently their work is often quite as good as that of children who are well and strong. In New York children too badly crippled to go to school even in the bus have been taught in their own homes by public-school teachers who spend an hour and a half three times a week with each home-bound cripple.

A number of states have established special institutions, sometimes known as hospital schools, to combine the medi-



ual and educational treatment of these handicapped children. The justification of these institutions is two-fold. First, children in rural districts and small towns are not likely to have access to both types of service; either they get surgery and medicine without education or education without surgery and medicine. Second, the disabled child often needs the stimulus of competition with others on the same physical basis as himself. In the home he is apt to be pampered and fail to find the stimulation which is necessary to bring out the possibilities that lie within him. At school he is more likely to be left to one side, isolated because of his disability and perhaps ridiculed for his grotesque motions. Hence there seems to be a real need for hospital schools in most of our states.

**Treatment of Disabled Soldiers and Sailors.**—Ever since its beginning, our government has made some provision, though often meager and inadequate, for disabled soldiers and sailors. Soon after the declaration of war with Germany provisions, going far beyond any previously offered, were made for the men who might be disabled in service. First of all, there was the War Risk Insurance in amounts which would ordinarily be quite out of their reach. Policies were written in multiples of \$500 with a maximum of \$10,000. Since the Armistice, it has been made possible for those who wished, to convert these policies into various forms of life insurance with permanent disability clauses attached. The rates are higher than those of the war time, but are still considerably lower than those charged by the ordinary insurance companies. In addition to insurance, the Act provided for compensation to men who were disabled, if their handicap amounted to 10 per cent or more and was received in line of duty. The amount of this compensation varied with the nature of the injury and with the number of dependents. The government also furnished without cost necessary hospital care and medical and surgical treatment. It provided specialized hospitals for different types of disabilities, some for cases of "shell shock," some for blindness, some for amputations, etc. In 1918 there was established a Federal Board for Vocational Edu-

cation whose responsibility was to begin where that of the hospital ended. The primary purpose of this board was to make available to men who had been disabled in the army or navy such re-education and vocational guidance as would enable them to find a new place in industry. During the course of re-education the board not only arranged formal schooling, but paid varying amounts for the maintenance and support of the trainee and his dependents. All through the work of hospitalization and vocational rehabilitation there has been more or less cooperation between the Veteran's Bureau, the Federal Board for Vocational Education and the American Red Cross. The history of this work is by no means free from fault, but it represents in principle, at least, a very definite forward step in the treatment of disabled persons.

An important agency which developed in war time, but which serves the disabled from both military and civilian life, is the Red Cross Institute for Crippled and Disabled Men. It maintains educational, field work, employment and research departments, library and publicity services. The educational department trains disabled men for various occupations such as printing, mechanical drafting, oxy-acetylene welding and the manufacture of artificial limbs. The department of field work gets in touch with prospective pupils by visiting hospitals, giving "parties for cripples," and other means of contact. The employment department has taken over a small placement bureau for cripples and studies industrial opportunities for disabled men. The research department has assembled and analyzed data concerning the work being done for disabled persons in other countries. The publicity services of the Institute have been aimed at correcting pernicious popular attitudes toward the disabled.

**Returning Disabled Workmen to Industry.**—The process commonly described as industrial rehabilitation may for convenience be divided into the following steps—first aid, surgical treatment, convalescence and mental readjustment, functional re-education, vocational advisement, vocational retraining, replacement in industry and supervision until



readjustment is complete. These should not be thought of as altogether separate and distinct steps, because they overlap and merge by insensible degrees one into the other.

First aid to the injured is important for the saving of life itself and for reduction in the severity of the injury. It may avert permanent disability or shorten its duration. But first aid is, of course, only an emergency measure. The more prompt and the more adequate is the medical and surgical treatment, including hospitalization, the greater is the probability of an early and complete return of earning power. This is illustrated by the case of a 20-year old girl, somewhat retarded mentally, who suffered a double Colles' fracture by falling through a trapdoor. For a time both her hands were useless; she could not move her fingers. The nervous shock was producing mental disorganization. But after three months of medical attention and physiotherapy (re-training of the muscles) she was back at work earning better wages than before the accident. The money cost of this prompt and adequate treatment was less than \$200. Without it she would have been a permanent cripple and would have been entitled to compensation of more than \$2,000.<sup>15</sup>

While the patient is yet in the hospital and still more during convalescence it is important to help him over the personal breakdown which may come with the shock of the injury, the discouragement of delayed recovery, the worry over financial loss and the demoralization of extended idleness. He needs to be protected against the popular attitude of regarding the disabled person as a proper object of charity. He needs a vision of the possibilities in store for him. Along with the surgical treatment and the mental readjustment there is often need for what is known as functional re-education. "Functional re-education consists of various methods to restore function in a disabled part, or to train other members to new work, or to teach the amputated cases the use of artificial members."<sup>16</sup> Its methods include: (1) physiotherapy—massage, hydro-

<sup>15</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. No. 281, pp. 318-319.

<sup>16</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. 264, p. 207.

therapy, mechanical appliances, gymnastics, games, etc., (2) occupational therapy—bedside occupations and work in shops, primarily to restore the functions of muscles and limbs, secondarily to train for a job, (3) mental training—individual and classroom work, diverting the mind from self and disability, stimulating new interests and laying a foundation for further education.

It has been found wise to undertake vocational advisement while the functional re-education is going on and even during convalescence. However, the competent adviser does not choose a vocation for a disabled person. He does assist him to choose an occupation which satisfies his ambitions and at the same time is feasible for him to follow. The attempt is made, wherever it seems practicable, to get the man back on his old job. This may involve some readjustments at the work place and perhaps some re-training. If the man cannot return to his former position, the effort is made to secure a similar job in which his previous experience can be used as a basis of skill in the new place. Failing this, it is necessary to help him work out some entirely new plan, preferably one which requires a minimum of re-training and personal readjustment. Partly for economic reasons and partly in the interest of morale extended vocational training is not apt to be resorted to until the other possibilities have been eliminated. Such vocational training rests on the assumption that the man has abilities which justify the expenditure of time and effort. The goal is, of course, a definite, paying job.

“Training may be considered as completed when the trainee is able to earn wages equal to those paid to other workers in the same type of job. Vocational rehabilitation is not completed until the trainee is placed in the job for which he has been trained and it has been demonstrated that he can hold it in competition.”<sup>17</sup> Hence it is necessary to assist disabled men who have been re-trained to find suitable jobs and to help them over the difficulties of readjusting themselves to working conditions. The agency

<sup>17</sup> U. S. Bur. Lab. Stat., Bul. 281, p. 165.



which has guided the process of restoration has not performed its whole duty unless it has kept in touch with the man until it is sure beyond a reasonable doubt that he is a success on the job.

The primary responsibility is frequently vested in a state rehabilitation agent, but his work can be done only through the cooperation of industrial accident commission, department of education and employment service. Most of the funds for this work are provided by the state, but there is the possibility of a dollar-for-dollar subsidy from the Federal Government under an Act passed in 1920. This involves acceptance by the state and approval by the Federal Board for Vocational Education.

**Prevention.**—In our discussion of the causes of physical disability we discovered some clues to a preventive program. The most important part of it will apparently center in the control of certain communicable diseases, particularly tuberculosis and infantile paralysis. This means isolation of infected persons who are likely to endanger others, prompt and adequate treatment of the victims so as to prevent serious after-effects, sanitary measures which will check the transmission of germs, and instruction in the hygiene of personal living to build up powers of resistance. Next in importance to the control of these communicable diseases is the prevention of accidents through general safety programs. In the preceding chapter we discussed what these might involve in industry. For the reduction of non-industrial accidents there is need of wide-spread popular education, through the school, the press, exhibits, bill-boards, public lectures, and discussion in small groups, as well as the strict enforcement of traffic regulations. Greater caution in the issuing of drivers' licenses, taking away the licenses and even the cars of careless drivers will undoubtedly diminish the number of accidents which occur on our streets and highways. There is much yet to be learned about the best methods of reducing the accident hazard and the risk of disability from disease, but if we should actually apply consistently one-half of what

we already know, it is quite certain that in the future we would have a very much smaller number of crippled and disabled persons in the United States.

Thus the task of reducing the number of the disabled demands not merely new medical knowledge, surgical skill, improved mechanical devices and traffic regulations; it demands such changes in social attitudes as will facilitate the *application* of new discoveries and inventions. This is the same problem we have met before, of turning knowledge into action, of altering personal habits and social customs in order to attain goals which we approve intellectually. Another phase of the problem is the prevention of social maladjustment in the lives of those whose physical disability we fail to prevent. To be sure, this too calls for technical skill, but above all it demands a fundamental change in popular attitudes toward the crippled and disabled. Moreover, such change will be resisted by the "vested interests" of those who seek personal salvation through almsgiving or social prestige in donations to popular charities. How can the traditions of Church and "Society" be altered?

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Secure and write out the life history of some physically disabled person. Pay particular attention to causes of the disability and the patient's attitudes.
2. Secure statistics concerning the number and types of disabled persons in your home district and state. What is being done for them?
3. What provision is made by law for the crippled and disabled whose condition can not be attributed, directly at least, to industry? Compare the laws of your state with those of some state which has more adequate provision.
4. Visit the office of a state rehabilitation agent or board for vocational education; learn what you can about the procedure of application, diagnosis, advisement, re-training and replacement in industry.
5. Visit a special class or school for crippled children. Report on building, furnishings, teaching staff, curriculum, numbers and types of children, school progress, transportation, correlation of school with medical and social agencies.



6. Visit a hospital or other institution for crippled children. Report on organization and administration; admission and dismissal policies and procedure; personnel; institutional care, including daily routine, medical and surgical attention, convalescence, educational activities, recreation; after care.
7. Visit a hospital or other institution for disabled adults, e.g., a U. S. Veterans' Hospital, and make similar report.
8. Discover what is being done in your own and other communities toward the prevention of accidents through legislation, law enforcement, popular education. Have you a safety council? What does it do?

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## CHAPTER XXIV

### THE BLIND AND THE DEAF

Problems of the blind differ in many respects from those of the deaf, while the difficulties of persons who are both blind and deaf are still different and far harder to overcome. In the story of Mr. White<sup>1</sup> we have seen some of the handicaps which may be imposed when an adult suddenly loses his sight. We saw how demoralization may easily follow such deprivation. In this present chapter we might have presented, to supplement the story of Mr. White, the life history of a person born blind. We might then have offered corresponding accounts of a person born deaf and one who lost his hearing later in life. Instead, however, we have chosen to present two frankly unusual, though rather well known, life histories, those of Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller. Our purpose in doing this is to emphasize the *social* as contrasted with the *physical* problems involved. Both Miss Bridgman and Miss Keller were "normal" at birth; both through severe illnesses in infancy lost sight, hearing and the use of spoken language. Thus the two were very much alike in their handicaps. Whatever differences appeared in their physical make-up were negligible as contrasted with their social experiences. Laura Bridgman was helped to overcome some of the barriers that excluded her from human society. But Helen Keller has gone much farther out into the world and has participated much more fully in the life of the larger society. Our interest is in this difference in the extent to which each escaped from her early isolation.)

<sup>1</sup> Chap. XVIII.



LAURA BRIDGMAN<sup>2</sup>

*Laura Bridgman*, widely known as "the first blind, deaf and dumb person to acquire the use of language," was born in Hanover, New Hampshire in 1829. Her family was described as of "good old New England stock." During infancy Laura was "puny and rickety" and had frequent "fits," so that she did not develop rapidly. But for about four months preceding her second birthday she appeared to be quite well and her senses seemed to be functioning normally. At this time she was stricken with scarlet fever, which left her without sight, hearing, speech or smell. The only senses left to her were those of taste, touch and muscular movement. Later in life she recovered the power of smell, at least to a limited degree, and she learned to utter a very few words; but she remained for sixty years totally blind and deaf.

*Isolation.*—The influence of these handicaps on Laura Bridgman can be most easily stated in terms of isolation. She was cut off from two of the three most important avenues of contact with other human beings. Touch alone remained. We shall presently show how completely dependent she was upon it, and also how very great use she made of this relatively undeveloped sense. In the rural household of her parents Laura was left very much to herself. The other children ran out to play, did their chores and went off to school. Mrs. Bridgman was busy with the host of duties that fall to the lot of a farmer's wife; Laura's father gave her still less attention.

During the five years between the scarlet fever and her going to the Perkins Institution for the Blind in Boston, there was only one real companion, a rather curious man by the name of Asa Tenney. His clothing was always old and shabby, and he appears to have had an impediment in his speech. Perhaps it was on account of his own handicaps that Mr. Tenney was so drawn to Laura. At any rate

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Howe, Maud, and Hall, Florence Howe, *Laura Bridgman, Dr. Howe's Famous Pupil, and What He Taught Her*, by permission of Little, Brown & Co.

he played a very important part in her life during these early years. He taught her many little things and won her undying affection.

After going to the institution she found a new friend in the superintendent, Dr. Samuel Gridley Howe, who with great patience strove day after day "to establish a connection between her mind and his own." There were obstacles, of which most of us can have but little conception, which had to be overcome before Laura could enjoy real social intercourse and participate in the life of those about her. Dr. Howe wrote in 1838 that "her mind dwells in darkness and stillness, as profound as that of a closed tomb at midnight." Much was accomplished toward breaking down the barriers, but Laura Bridgman was never happy for any length of time outside the institution, and spent most of her life within its four walls.

*Contacts.*—It was largely through her sense of touch that she made her way a little distance into the larger world. It was the restriction to this one mode of contact that she never escaped. While she was still with her parents in New Hampshire the means of communicating with her were exceedingly limited. Approval was indicated by patting her head, disapproval by rubbing her hand. Pushing her one way meant to go, and pulling her another way to come. For disciplinary purposes she could be reached only by her father's firm hand on her shoulder or the stamping of his foot on the floor. When she went to the Perkins Institution, it was through touch that she became acquainted with her new surroundings. "Her little hands were continually stretched out, and her tiny fingers in constant motion, like the feelers of an insect."

Laura Bridgman's ability to recognize the presence of other persons and to identify those of her acquaintance was quite remarkable. The first she seems to have achieved through the jarring of the floor or the disturbance of the air. The second was often accomplished by touching a garment. She also distinguished the footsteps of different people.

Of course all communication was through a sign language



—spelling out words in the hand. In company the conversation had to be transmitted to her through an interpreter, who was usually her special teacher. The process of reading to Miss Bridgman was similar. The reader holding the book with one hand, spelled the words with the other into her palm. This sign language was used not only in communicating with others; it was employed also in “self-communication” of various sorts. Indeed, she was often seen talking to herself, spelling the words with one hand into the palm of the other. Even when she was asleep, her fingers were sometimes at work, perhaps expressing the ideas in her dreams.

However, it would be incorrect to assume that Laura Bridgman depended exclusively upon touch, in the narrow sense of the word, for her give-and-take with other people. We have already noted her ability to recognize footsteps; she also sensed the vibrations of a piano or a bell. She learned to pronounce a few words and had distinct sounds by which she designated various persons of her acquaintance. There were nearly sixty of these monosyllabic “noises.” But she never really learned to speak, as did Helen Keller.

*Education.*—Laura Bridgman’s education was begun by Asa Tenney, who taught her the difference between land and water, between a stone and an apple and other simple bits of concrete information. But the development of abstract thinking had to wait upon the acquisition of the sign language. This was no easy task. Starting with the general use of her hands, the steps were almost painfully slow. There was first the teaching of the twenty-six signs, corresponding to the Roman alphabet, the combination of these word-signs, the identifying of signs and objects, all of which was at first a matter of routine imitation with Miss Bridgman. Many devices were tried, such as pasting labels with raised letters on the objects named, leading her to compare these with detached labels, separating the object and the corresponding label to see if she could make the appropriate combination, cutting the label into its component parts, a letter to each piece, etc. At length she

grasped the notion that here was a system by which she could make a sign of anything that was in her mind, and from that time on the process had real meaning to her.

We cannot take the time here to go through the whole course of Laura Bridgman's education, the making of signs in the hand, numerals, abstract nouns, prepositions, writing, arithmetic, geography, etc. Suffice it to say that she required an enormous amount of individual attention; for years she took the whole time of one teacher.

*Personal Relations.*—Laura Bridgman's associations with other people were necessarily different from those of most of us; yet they had much in common with those of all other human beings. She developed very great affection for her teachers and for the other children in the Perkins Institution. She had the same fondness for dress, for ribbons and for other finery as did other girls of her age. When she had a new bonnet or dress she was very anxious to go out in it, and if people did not notice the object of her pride, she would place their hands upon it as a means of getting the desired attention. She was "exact-ing in her requirements, yet not censorious in her judgments" of friends and acquaintances. When she spoke of their faults it was "with sorrow, but not in a detracting spirit." Dr. Howe felt that this was not an expression of her native temperament. On the contrary, it seemed to him that she had a "constitutional disposition to irritability and violence of temper."

While her handicaps limited the means of insight into the characteristics of other people, they also protected her against the conscious or unconscious deception involved in superficial appearances. Beauty of person and sweetness of voice naturally did not affect her. The part played in ordinary conversation by the glance of the eye and the smile had no significance for her. While these all interfered with the understanding of people, some of her associates felt that she judged people more nearly according to their "true worth" than did many seeing and hearing folk.

*Escape from Isolation.*—The extent to which Laura



Bridgman broke through the barriers of her isolation and came to participate in social life has already been suggested. When she was twelve years old, she attended a tea away from the institution, where she seemed quite sociable and appeared to enjoy the affair as much as any of the rest. A friend writing of her at the age of fifteen said, "I soon lost all painful impressions in regard to her limited capacities, for she seemed literally 'one of us.' " But in spite of these gains, she never learned to live successfully away from the institution for more than a short time. In her twenty-third year Laura went back to her home in New Hampshire. She was much attached to her parents and to her brothers and sisters; it was thought that the family life would mean much to her. But the quiet farmhouse was very tame after the busy life of the institution. The other children had their home tasks and their school work; the mother was as busy as ever; Mr. Tenney was dead; there was no one who could devote much time to Laura. On one occasion she became so impatient with her mother for not talking to her that she struck her. She lost her interest in life, her appetite failed and she was literally dying of homesickness, when she was taken back to Perkins. Two years later a second experiment was tried with no more success. It was decided then that she must live always in the institution and there she died at the age of sixty.

#### HELEN KELLER<sup>3</sup>

Fifty years after the birth of Laura Bridgman there came into the world another girl, normal at first and later blind and deaf, whose achievements were destined to make her famous. Helen Keller was born in Tuscumbia, Alabama, in 1880, of a prominent southern family. For nineteen months she developed rapidly, a healthy, happy child. Then came a blighting illness described as "acute congestion of the stomach and brain." Sight and hearing were completely and permanently lost, though the sense of

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Keller, Helen, *The Story of My Life*, by permission of Doubleday, Page & Co., with supplementary data from another of her books, *The World I Live In*.

smell remained. Before the sickness Helen was learning to talk; afterwards practically all speech was lost through disuse and the failure of her sense of hearing. Some memories of these early months were certainly retained, but the little girl presently became as one born blind and deaf.

*Isolation.*—Miss Keller does not remember when she first realized that she was different from other people, but it was before her teacher, Miss Sullivan, came to her in 1887. She noticed that her mother and friends did not use signs, but “talked with their mouths.” Sometimes little Helen would stand between two persons who were talking and touch their lips. She could not understand and was vexed. She moved her own lips and made frantic gestures, but, of course, without gaining entrance into the conversation. This made her so angry at times that she kicked and screamed. The desire to express herself grew and her pantomimic gestures, with which she had made her simple wants known, became less and less adequate. She felt as if invisible hands were holding her.

Like Laura Bridgman, Helen Keller was largely dependent upon the sense of touch. Though she used it to enormously greater advantage than did Miss Bridgman, she too discovered its limitations. She found that it was impossible for her to distinguish the tone of another’s voice; she thus missed those finer shades of meaning which are conveyed by the manner of speaking rather than by the particular words used. Likewise she could not watch the expressions on a speaker’s face, “and a look is often the very soul of what one says.” In new situations, instead of getting a general impression of the whole and then resolving it into its parts, she had first to feel the parts and then assemble them in her mind.

*Contacts.*—Miss Keller’s earliest communications with other people after her illness were through crude signs which developed spontaneously. If she wanted bread, she would imitate the acts of cutting the slices and buttering them. If she wished her mother to make ice cream for dinner, she made the sign for working the freezer and shivered, indicating cold.



Her dependence on touch is well illustrated by a visit to a circus in her eighth year. She fed the elephants and climbed upon the back of one. She felt of some young lions and shook hands with a bear. One of the leopards licked her hands and the man in charge of the giraffes lifted her up so that she could feel their ears and see how tall they were. The clowns, riders and ropewalkers let her handle their costumes and follow their movements with her hands whenever this was possible.

It was through the sense of touch that Miss Keller learned eventually to speak. She not only felt the positions of lips, tongue and vocal cords, but also sensed the vibrations of the voice. From these sensations she could sometimes understand what was being said. Closely akin to these experiences was her ability to distinguish vibrations of the air or jarring of the floor associated with different sounds and motions. By these she said she knew whether a carpenter was using a saw or a plane; she identified the noise of a train, the din of city streets. By them she also recognized her friends and even caught a glimpse of their feelings. Miss Sullivan thought that she was familiar with the muscular variations associated with the emotions, and thus knew from tactual contact whether those about her were happy or sad. This sensitiveness to vibrations enabled Miss Keller to communicate with others by tapping the floor with her foot, using the telegraphic alphabet.

Not alone in the wider use of touch, but in her sense of smell, did Helen Keller have the advantage over Laura Bridgman. She thoroughly enjoyed the perfume of flowers and fruits; she judged by the odor the kind of country she was passing through or the sort of house she was entering. Her olfactory sense aided the tactual in the identification of people. "Human odors are as varied and capable of recognition as hands and faces. The dear odor of those I love are so definite, so unmistakable, that nothing can quite obliterate them."<sup>4</sup>

*Personal Relationships.*—From the beginning Miss

<sup>4</sup> Keller, Helen, *The World I Live In*, p. 73.

Keller had a wider range of contacts than did Miss Bridgman. But she too had to learn to live happily with other people. One of Miss Sullivan's letters after going to Tuscumbia contained this description. "Helen's table manners are appalling. She puts her hands in our plates and helps herself, and when the dishes are passed, she grabs them and takes out whatever she wants. This morning I would not let her put her hand in my plate. She persisted, and a contest of wills followed. Naturally the family was much disturbed, and left the room. I locked the dining-room door, and proceeded to eat my breakfast, though the food almost choked me. Helen was lying on the floor, kicking and screaming and trying to pull my chair from under me. She kept this up for half an hour, then she got up to see what I was doing."<sup>5</sup> This was a sample of the little girl's tyranny over the family and her passionate outbursts of temper.

However, she was not entirely lacking in sociability, even in those days. She liked to have people about and to go visiting. Like Laura Bridgman, she was fond of dress and finery; but unlike her, she made friends readily and remembered them without difficulty. After she learned the significance of word-signs, she wanted to teach the letters to everyone she met. She also had a strong impulse to repeat what was told to her. At the first Christmas celebration after Miss Sullivan's coming Helen took great delight in the gifts for other children and thoroughly enjoyed sharing the affair with them.

*Education.*—In many ways the systematic education of Helen Keller had much broader foundations than did that of Laura Bridgman. The latter was a sickly child who had little share in the life of the household; while the former was in the kitchen, about the farm buildings, playing with the child of the colored cook and having about as varied experiences as could come to an untutored little blind-deaf girl. But there were serious limitations, as we have already noted.

It was through reading Dickens' *American Notes* that

<sup>5</sup> Keller, Helen, *The Story of My Life*, p. 307.



the Keller family learned about Laura Bridgman and what had been done for her at the Perkins Institution for the Blind in Boston. So Captain Keller wrote to see if it would be possible to secure an instructor for his little girl. After some months Miss Sullivan came to them.

Miss Sullivan herself had become almost totally blind very early in life and had been educated at the Perkins Institution. Later her sight was partially restored, but this personal experience undoubtedly helped her in teaching Helen Keller. Miss Sullivan also had the advantage of living for six years in the house with Laura Bridgman. After she had been employed to teach Helen Keller, she read Dr. Howe's reports and notes on his work with Laura Bridgman, as a basis for the task she was about to undertake.

It is quite impossible for us to detail the various elements which entered into Miss Keller's education; we shall have to content ourselves with a few samples. One of Miss Sullivan's first steps was to give Helen a doll and spell the word d-o-l-l into her hand. Helen repeated this "in monkey-like imitation," as she did the naming of other objects, but not for some time did she discover that everything has a name and that these word-signs corresponded to the various objects and activities of her experience. Once that was achieved, progress was rapid.

Miss Sullivan decided to act as Helen's nurse, not only to be spared the bother of a servant, but especially to be able to teach the girl at odd moments. Indeed, this informality was fundamental in her method. Moreover, she talked to Helen as she would to any other child, except that the medium of communication had to be the hands instead of the ears. Wherever possible she made a game of the lesson. As a result Helen was eager to learn. First came the acquiring of a vocabulary for conversation, then counting, reading raised type, writing the braille system, etc. Much use was made of the life about her, the plants, the animals, the people; all instruction was in terms of experiences that were real to the girl.

After a year of home teaching, Helen was taken on a

visit to Boston and the Perkins Institution for the Blind. After that she traveled more or less and spent most of her winters in the North. In 1890 she learned to speak, and later attended a school for the deaf in New York in order to improve her voice. She visited Niagara Falls, took in the World's Fair at Chicago in 1893, and in 1896 entered a girls' school in Cambridge to prepare for Radcliffe. With Miss Sullivan's help she completed the work and successfully passed her examinations. In 1900 she entered Radcliffe College from which she subsequently graduated.

Some of the difficulties under which she labored are thus described in her own words. "For a while, indeed, I had to copy my Latin in braille, so that I could recite with the other girls. My instructors soon became sufficiently familiar with my imperfect speech to answer my questions readily and correct mistakes. I could not make notes in class or write exercises; but I wrote all my compositions and translations at home on my typewriter. Each day Miss Sullivan went to the classes with me and spelled into my hand with infinite patience all that the teachers said. In study hours she had to look up new words for me and read and reread notes and books I did not have in raised print. The tedium of that work is hard to conceive."<sup>6</sup>

*Escape from Isolation.*—It will be recalled that Laura Bridgman never learned to live successfully outside of the institution or to participate very fully in the life of the larger society. Her sayings and writings seemed always a bit childish. In marked contrast are the achievements of Helen Keller. She had a pony to ride; she learned to enjoy rowing, canoeing, swimming and sailing. She rode a bicycle, played checkers and chess. She learned not only to read, but to speak, and not only in English, but in French and German as well. The extent to which she escaped from her isolation and participated in the larger life about her is suggested by an address which she delivered before the American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf in 1896. A few sentences are quoted here.

<sup>6</sup> *The Story of My Life*, p. 84.



"Of course I know that it is not always easy for strangers to understand me, but it will be by-and-by; and in the meantime I have the unspeakable happiness of knowing that my family and friends rejoice in my ability to speak. My little sister and baby brother love to have me tell them stories in the long summer evenings when I am at home; and my mother and teacher often ask me to read to them from my favorite books. I also discuss the political situation with my dear father." <sup>7</sup>

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**Social Isolation of the Blind and the Deaf.**—Before going on it is well to remind ourselves that there are very few people who are both blind and deaf (169 were reported by the 1920 census). The isolation of most blind people and of most deaf people is, therefore, decidedly less marked than that of Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller. Nevertheless, they face real barriers to social intercourse.

For the blind face-to-face contacts, in the sense of "seeing eye to eye," are obviously out of the question. They cannot read the facial expressions of those with whom they talk; and we all realize that much is added to what a man says by the expressions of his countenance. His smile eases an otherwise difficult interview; his frown or yawn is a signal to change the course of conversation. It is the gleam of the eye, tension of the lips and wrinkling of the forehead that betoken approval, disapproval or indifference, when the spoken words are not so revealing. To appreciate this more fully, contrast the telephone conversation with the one conducted *vis-à-vis*.

The deaf, on the other hand, while seeing the facial expression, miss the tone of voice. Discussion is slowed down—unless they be lip-readers—by the necessity of transmitting everything through sign language or writing. The deaf are more apt to realize that they are missing something than are the blind. Hence the deaf are more likely to be distressed and perplexed over their lack of

<sup>7</sup> *The Story of My Life*, p. 392.

understanding. This mental strain may lead to intense fatigue both physical and mental.

When we turn from primary to secondary contacts there are similar differences between the situation of the blind and the deaf. The blind person can listen to lectures, use the telephone and radio, but he can not read the daily paper or the latest novel, he cannot appreciate moving pictures. The deaf person, on the other hand, can read papers, magazines and books, but is barred from the telephone and radio. Both are excluded from certain vocations. A blind man would not make a very good farmer, nor would a deaf man be likely to succeed as a salesman. The blind man is especially handicapped in getting about. He is deprived of certain contacts through his inability to go hither and yon without guidance.

Popular attitudes play an important part in the isolation of both the blind and the deaf. Both are frequently classed as "defective," "dependent," "socially inadequate," etc. Magazine articles and official reports of an earlier day spoke of the blind as "doomed to a life of idleness and miserable dependence." They were asserted to live in a "land of shadows and silence." Their state was described as one of "hopeless darkness, wretchedness, and misery."<sup>8</sup> Perhaps worst of all is the pity that is bestowed, especially upon the blind. Pity for persons in a state that suggests helplessness involves social distance. It implies lack of participation in community life. This sentimental attitude is probably responsible for the readiness with which most people "drop a penny in a blind man's hat," looking upon him as a natural and legitimate beggar. But their assumption that he is necessarily a pauper is in itself a handicap, holding him at arm's length and discouraging his attempts at "normal" economic and social activity.

The deaf are not so easily identified in the crowd, but they too are frequently regarded as a "peculiar" class of folk. Attitudes toward them variously combine wonder, misgiving, fear, and aversion. They are not understood; hence they are viewed askance.

<sup>8</sup> Best, Harry, *The Blind*, pp. 274-5.



Not only are blind and deaf individuals more or less isolated. They tend also to be segregated into groups of their own, set somewhat apart from the general population. This is especially natural with the deaf. They find it difficult to communicate with hearing persons, while their sign language and other media of intercourse are easily used among themselves. When among hearing people the deaf are, as we have indicated, frequently distressed and perplexed by their inability to understand what is being said. When among those who share their handicap they seem to feel more at ease. One manifestation of this segregation is the extent to which the deaf intermarry with their own kind. One study found nearly three-fourths of the married deaf to have deaf husbands or wives. The census statistics, however, show only a little over one-half of the married deaf to have deaf partners. Blindness does not appear to bring about the same degree of segregation in marriage as does deafness, for many of the blind lose their sight late in life after the marital relationship has been established. However, those who are born blind or those who lose their sight early in life do seem to experience a definite segregation. They are usually educated together and prepared for a similar group of vocations. They frequently belong to organizations of blind folk whose purpose may be sociability, mutual aid or the promotion of the interests of blind people in general. Hence, those who are blind from childhood tend to be segregated more or less into groups of their own.

It is important to distinguish in another way between the experience of one who is born blind or deaf and one who loses sight or hearing later in life. The former does not for a long time, if ever, appreciate what he is missing. The development of his personality is restricted, but there is no sense of inferiority until he gains some appreciation of the freedom and the facilities at the disposal of seeing or hearing persons. The person who loses sight or hearing, however, has a difficult re-adjustment to effect. He must learn to get along without certain types of contacts. He must find substitutes for lost means of communication.

Realization that he is inevitably excluded from participation in certain activities of groups to which he belongs may prove very depressing. If the loss be sudden, as in an accident, the blow to his morale may be quite staggering. If it be gradual he may be torn for months or years between hope of recovery and despair as to his condition if he should suffer complete loss of sight or hearing.

**The Blind in the United States.**<sup>9</sup>—The number of blind persons can be determined with much greater accuracy than can the number of those affected by most other handicapping conditions. Yet, even in this case there are difficulties of enumeration which preclude accuracy. In 1920, the Census enumerators reported 52,500 blind persons, or approximately 500 per million of the general population. This number is smaller both actually and proportionately than the number of blind persons reported in 1910 and 1900. Probably these variations are due in part to changes in the instructions to enumerators and in the completeness of the count. However, there seems good reason to believe that the number of the blind is decreasing.

Of those reported in 1920, 30,000 were males and 22,000 females. As to age groups, by far the largest number were advanced in years. More than 20,000 were 65 years old or over. Nearly 14,000 were between 45 and 65. Less than 10,000 were under the age of 25. This is due in part to the fact that those blind from childhood are about as likely to reach an advanced age as are seeing folk, and to the further fact that vision is lost more frequently after middle life than before. Of the 52,500 reported in 1920, less than 4,000 were born blind and only 3,000 lost their vision in infancy.

Data are available concerning the education of 40,000 of the blind in 1920. Out of 14,000 who lost their sight before the age of 20, 11,000 had attended school after becoming blind; while out of 25,000 who lost their vision after the age of 20 less than 9,000 had subsequent schooling. Of the first group, 10,000 had attended a special school or

<sup>9</sup> Most of the data in this paragraph are based on U. S. Bureau of the Census, *The Blind in the United States*, 1920.



workshop for the blind, while only 2,000 of the second group had enjoyed such privileges. Of the whole 40,000 less than 12,000 were able to read any kind of raised type.

As to economic status, data are available concerning 7,000 of the blind 10 years of age or over in 1920. Of these only 3,000 were reported to be self-supporting. However, more than 5,000 were dependent at least in part upon their occupation for the means of subsistence. Of these 7,000, 1,600 earned less than \$200 in a year and only 500 earned \$1,200, or more. The median earnings of the whole group were about \$500. The occupational classification of 40,000 blind persons shows 32,500 not gainfully employed at all. Of 6,000 males and 1,300 females who were gainfully employed in 1920, 2,500 men and 600 women were engaged in manufacturing and mechanical industries. The most frequent occupations of the men were broom making, piano tuning, chair caning and basket weaving. Half of the women in this entire group were seamstresses. Out of 1,200 blind persons engaged in trade, 300 were hucksters and peddlers. The only other important sub-groups were salesmen, clerks, news carriers and news dealers. Curiously, some 900 blind people were classified as engaged in agriculture. It seems likely that most of these were farmers who lost their sight late in life and continued to direct the activities of their farms without doing much of the real work themselves. The other important group consisted of those engaged in professional service, numbering 750 men and 250 women. Of these, the majority were musicians or teachers of music. There were, however, a few clergymen, teachers and lawyers.

Some further light on the economic status of the blind may be had from reports as to the number receiving state or county aid. There were reported in 1920, 7,800, of whom 4,900 were males and 2,900 females. Five thousand six hundred of the 7,800 were 45 years of age or over. Only 400 were under the age of twenty. It is evident from these combined data that blindness constitutes a very serious economic handicap. But it is also plain that many blind persons are able in spite of this to make their own

living and take an active part in the economic life of the community.

**Causes of Blindness.**<sup>10</sup>—It might be supposed that the causes of blindness could be determined with considerable ease and exactness. Unfortunately, this is not true. The statement of cause often represents a mere guess on the part of the blind person or his relatives. Even medical examination often fails to reveal the actual cause. Hence, such statistics as are presented by the Bureau of the Census or other students of this problem must be regarded as affording only approximate indications of the relative importance of various causes and groups of causes. In 1920 out of some 35,000 blind persons for whom data were returned, two-fifths reported specific affections of the eye such as cataract, glaucoma, atrophy of the optic nerve, ophthalmia neonatorum,<sup>11</sup> and trachoma. One-sixth reported their blindness to be due to such general diseases as measles, meningitis and scarlet fever. Another one-sixth reported the cause of their blindness to be accidents from explosives, firearms, falls, etc. Finally, there were about one-fourth whose reports as to causation were indefinite or obviously inaccurate. These included the blind who stated that their condition was congenital (not otherwise specified) that it was due to neuralgia, sore eyes, etc. From the first to the fifty-fourth year, external injury is the most frequent cause of blindness. From the fifth to the thirty-fourth year it produces more than one-fourth of all blindness, but from fifty-five on, cataract is the leading cause. Atrophy of the optic nerve gradually increases in frequency up to middle life, after which it continues as the second most important causal factor. Certain diseases such

<sup>10</sup> Most of the data in this paragraph are based on U. S. Bureau of the Census, *The Blind in the United States*, 1920.

<sup>11</sup> It is widely believed that a large percentage of blindness is traceable directly to syphilis and gonorrhea. While the census data are by no means conclusive, they indicate that these diseases play a minor rôle in the causation of blindness. Even if all cases reported as "ophthalmia neonatorum" or "congenital" were due to venereal disease, the total would be only 10 per cent of all the blind. Syphilis itself is named as a cause in less than one per cent of all cases, but it is undoubtedly present much more frequently.



as cataract and glaucoma seem to appear more frequently among the blind whose parents, or one of them, had the same disease. Best<sup>12</sup> thinks this indicates an hereditary tendency, but admits that even if all cases of such diseases were classed as hereditary, the total would not reach 30 per cent. Since many of these are demonstrably not hereditary, the actual number of cases affected by heredity would probably not exceed 10 per cent. In other words, there are few cases in which we have evidence which justifies our regarding blindness as in any very direct way a product of heredity.

**Provision for the Blind.**—Provision for the blind in the United States includes special schools, home teaching, homes and workshops, and pensions for the blind. Nearly every state has established a state school for the blind in which sometimes the deaf are also given instruction. In recent years there have been established special classes in the public schools. Both in the special classes and in the state schools there is a combination of intellectual instruction and physical training with special attention to music and manual training. Specific vocational education is given in the fields of domestic science, typewriting, piano tuning, broom making, basketry, book binding, etc. There are a number of printing houses which publish books for the blind and there are a dozen periodicals in raised print. A number of libraries contain books in raised type and there are a few special libraries for the blind.

There are 14 or 15 homes for blind adults. These are all private institutions and are little more than asylums for the aged and infirm blind who are also homeless and destitute. There are about one-half as many special homes for blind children, also private institutions. They usually combine three features, a nursery for the care of blind babies, a hospital for the treatment of various complaints, and a kindergarten department. The workshops for the blind are sometimes public and sometimes private in their control. They combine in many instances vocational training and fairly permanent employment. The principal indus-

<sup>12</sup> Best, Harry, *The Blind*, Ch. VII.

tries carried on are the making of brooms, mattresses, baskets, hammocks, rugs and caning of chairs. The wages are usually low and actual earnings must often be supplemented by grants of relief.

About ten states have provided special pensions for the blind. Most of these are in the Middle West. There is much dispute as to the wisdom of such pensions, it being argued, on the one hand, that either the pensions will be inadequate or they will impose an undue burden on the tax-paying public; that they tend to break down self-reliance and check the efforts to find employment; that they cause the relatives of a blind person to consider themselves relieved of their responsibility; and that, after all, these pensions are merely a special variety of poor relief. As such, they could be provided without special legislation, along with aid granted to other persons in need of financial assistance. On the other hand, it is argued that in ordinary relief work the blind are frequently neglected, that large numbers of them are unable to earn their own living, that a pension would be more economical than institutional care and that for some of the blind there appears little else to be done.

In our enumeration of agencies serving the blind, we should not overlook the private associations which have been organized to promote their interests in various ways, organizations composed of blind persons, and state commissions for the blind. The activities of these various agencies overlap considerably, but include among others a continuing census of the blind, bureaus of information and advice, circulation of books, home teaching, employment bureaus, the furnishing of tools or supplies, marketing of home products, and education of the public with reference to the needs of the blind.

**The Deaf in the United States.**<sup>13</sup>—Although speech and hearing are anatomically separate (many people being deaf but able to speak and others having speech defects without

<sup>13</sup> Most of the data in this paragraph are based on U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Deaf-Mutes in the United States*: 1920.



deafness), the United States Census until 1920 used the misleading term "deaf and dumb."

In the 1920 census there were enumerated 45,000 deaf persons. For 31,000 of these who were ten years of age and over, special schedules were returned showing the means of communication employed. Among the 31,000 there were 12,000 able to speak, and 17,000 able to read lips; 23,000 used sign-language; an equal number employed finger-spelling; 24,000 could write. The great majority made use of two or more of these techniques. For only 600 was it reported that none of these means of communication was employed.

The statistics for the deaf present some interesting contrasts with those for the blind. In both groups there is a preponderance of males, but it is much more marked among the blind (136 males to 100 females among the blind; 119 males to 100 females among the deaf). The ages at which the handicaps appeared present a still more striking contrast. Whereas less than 8 per cent of the blind were born in that state, 39 per cent of the deaf were so from birth; and whereas less than 6 per cent of the blind lost their sight during infancy, 49 per cent of the deaf lost their hearing during the pre-school years. A very large percentage of the blind were able to see until they reached middle life, while an extremely small number of the deaf have been able to hear since they were ten years old.

The economic status of the deaf likewise stands in marked contrast to that of the blind. Whereas a large proportion of the latter were reported to be dependent upon others for at least a part of their living, among the deaf five-sixths of the males and over two-thirds of the females were reported to be self-supporting. Moreover, the earnings of the deaf were considerably greater than those of the blind. The median earnings of the deaf were approximately \$900 a year as against \$500 for the blind. Among the blind only 7 per cent earned as much as \$1,200, while among the deaf over 22 per cent were earning \$1,500 or more. Finally, we have convincing evidence of the economic advantage of the deaf in the fact that in 1920 those who received state or

county aid constituted about 15 per cent of the blind, but only 2 per cent of the deaf.

**Causes of Deafness.**—As in the case of blindness, there are many difficulties in the way of determining the real causes of deafness. Thus according to the 1920 census, which reported some cause for the condition of 32,500 deaf persons, two-fifths were described as congenitally deaf. But this does not tell us why these 13,500 persons were born deaf. For further light we turn back to the 1910 census data. From these we learn that one-fourth of those who returned special schedules reported one or more deaf relatives. In about one-tenth of these cases the deaf relatives were parents. Of those who had deaf parents, two-thirds also had deaf brothers or sisters. Over half of the deaf whose parents were first cousins had deaf brothers or sisters. All this suggests heredity, but the whole matter is very far from clear. It appears that in a small proportion of cases the deafness was actually hereditary, but that in the great majority of the congenitally deaf some other cause must be sought. For those whose deafness was described as adventitious (acquired after birth) the causes most frequently ascribed were scarlet fever, meningitis, brain fever, measles and typhoid fever, in the order named. Stated in other terms, one-fourth of the cases of deafness in 1920 were ascribed to causes affecting the middle ear—most of these involved an ulcerated condition. One-fifth of the cases were ascribed to causes affecting the internal ear—most of these affected the auditory nerve rather than the labyrinth of the ear.

**Provision for the Deaf.**—Provision for the deaf is in many respects similar to that for the blind. There are in most states schools for the deaf, frequently combined with those for the blind. There are special classes in the public schools. There are, in addition, a number of private institutions and organizations to promote the interests of the deaf. Among these are the Convention of American Instructors of the Deaf, the Conference of Superintendents and Principals and the American Association to Promote the Teaching of Speech to the Deaf. But perhaps the most



important of the private agencies is the Volta Bureau of Washington, D. C., which was founded by Alexander Graham Bell, inventor of the telephone, for the collection and diffusion of information concerning the deaf. It has issued various publications including the *Volta Review*, a monthly magazine. The outstanding public agency is Gallaudet College, maintained by the Federal government at Washington, D. C., to bring higher education in the "liberal arts" within easier reach of the deaf.

**Prevention of Blindness and Deafness.**—Since communicable diseases play an important rôle in the causation of both blindness and deafness, it is evident that prevention of these conditions is bound up with a general health program and especially with the control of such diseases as scarlet fever, meningitis, measles and typhoid fever. The prospects of eliminating the blindness which appears in infancy are suggested by an editorial in *The Survey*.<sup>14</sup>

There was once a time when a quarter of all new-born babies developed "sore eyes," ophthalmia neonatorum. Many of these babies were blinded for life. They formed a third of the whole burden of disability borne by nurseries, schools and homes for the blind as well as by their own families. A few days ago the Chicago Board of Health reported that to the best of its knowledge not one of the 56,724 children born in that city in 1922 has lost his sight. Cleveland believes that it has no blind child of less than three years. Massachusetts has not recorded an instance of the infection for more than five years. Grand Rapids has had a clean slate for so long that there is no case of blindness among its school children.

There remain to be eliminated the specific affections of the eyes such as cataract and glaucoma, which appear later in life, and accidents which are the leading occasion of blindness up to and during middle age. For the former the most important preventive measures appear to be the assurance of timely and skilled medical and surgical treatment. For the latter emphasis may well be laid upon the safety movement in industry. Among the agencies chiefly concerned with the prevention of blindness are the National

<sup>14</sup> *Survey*, 51: 379, 1924.

Committee for the Prevention of Blindness, the American Medical Association's Committee on Conservation of Vision, and the Eyesight Conservation Council of America. It is estimated that nearly two-thirds of all blindness is preventable.<sup>15</sup>

The outlook for the prevention of deafness is not quite so hopeful, but it is believed that through the control of communicable diseases the present number of the deaf can be reduced by one-third.<sup>16</sup> Additional gains may be made through prompt and adequate medical treatment of these diseases, attention to primary ear troubles and the discovery and treatment of children with impaired hearing. In the prevention of congenital deafness it appears that something may be gained through avoidance of consanguineous marriages by those born deaf. However, there does not seem to be any basis for demanding prohibitory legislation. We come back once more to place our chief reliance on a general health program, eliminating sources of infection and building up powers of resistance.

But assuming that for a long time to come there will be more or less blindness and deafness, what can be done to meet the social problems involved in the isolation, the economic handicap and the inferiority complex which so often accompany them? Is it possible to make such changes in social arrangements and attitudes that the blind or deaf person may participate in community life to his own satisfaction and the advantage of the group? The relative success of some experiments in education and in vocational adjustment indicate that it is possible to make headway in this direction. But when we consider the baffling problems which must be faced by seeing and hearing folk, we find it hard to believe that the blind and the deaf can escape crises which will involve frequent and often continued unadjustments. If, however, they can be spared the trying situations implied by the terms maladjustment and demoralization, much will have been accomplished.

<sup>15</sup> Best, Harry, *The Blind*, p. 122.

<sup>16</sup> Best, Harry, *The Deaf*, pp. 22-23.



# PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Write the life history of one blind or deaf person, noting probable causes, readjustments made necessary if the handicap was acquired, changes in personality, and degree of escape from the isolation.
2. Make a similar study and report on the experiences of someone with limited sight or hearing.
3. Secure data concerning the number of blind and deaf persons in your home district and state, including causation, age of becoming blind or deaf, marital status, occupation, etc.
4. Visit a state institution for the blind or the deaf and report according to schedules outlined in preceding chapters.
5. Visit a special class for the blind or the deaf and report, especially on the methods of instruction employed.
6. Interview representatives of organizations engaged in promoting the interests of the blind or the deaf.
7. Secure copies of books or periodicals published for the blind or the deaf. Contrast the publications for these two handicapped groups with each other and with those for the general public.

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## CHAPTER XXV

### NERVOUS AND MENTAL DISEASES

#### MR. MATHEWS AND HIS FAMILY

In 1919 Mr. Mathews called at the office of a Family Welfare Society to inquire about placing his children in an institution. He told a harrowing tale of his wife's sudden death at a railroad station while on the way to the home of her daughter by a former marriage. He further told of difficulties he had in another state, where he said he had killed a man who tried to force him to play a game of billiards; he was acquitted on grounds of self-defense, but was then "out of spite" committed to a State Hospital for the Insane. Mr. Mathews was referred to a children's institution, but he did not wish to meet its requirements and presently disappeared with his family.

Two years later he turned up again, asking for help, saying that his wife and child were ill; that he had placed a note with the National Exchange Bank for collection, and that when this came through he would get along all right. A visitor from the Family Welfare Society called and found the family of six living in one room on the third floor over a store in a very poor neighborhood. Mr. Mathews now claimed to be 79 years old (45 was the age he had given before) and to have been married to his present wife twenty-one years. Afterwards he admitted that they had been married less than two years and that the sick child was a daughter of Mrs. Mathews by a former "husband." Gradually other difficulties were revealed; the whole family was found to be syphilitic, the children had diseased tonsils and adenoids, Mr. Mathews worked very irregularly, told innumerable lies and opposed medical treatment for

his children; the children were out of school a great deal; later Mrs. Mathews ran off with another man; the oldest girl was found to be feeble-minded.

*Mr. Mathews'* first story has already been told. That most of it was false was presently established. But the real facts about his life were very hard to discover and most of them remain unknown. His most prominent trait was his persistent and useless (pathological) lying. For example, why should he claim to have killed a man in M——— when the only police record under this name or any of his numerous aliases was "boot-legging"? Why should he claim to have been a patient in a state hospital, when no record of his presence could be found? One can understand the effort to gain sympathy by the dramatic account of his wife's death. The facts were that she died at home (not at the Union Station) of tuberculosis. The National Exchange Bank held no note for Mr. Mathews and had never heard of him. Other proven lies included a claim that he was a locomotive engineer, a member of the switchmen's union, a steam fitter, and a stationary engineer—one after the other. He told of Tessie, the oldest child, being a patient in Cook County Hospital and at the Mayo Clinic. Even the statements as to his birthplace and early life were found to be untrue. The best clues to an understanding of these many and absurd lies were (1) his luetic history (previous case of syphilis) and (2) his eager pursuit of the lime-light. The last was perhaps most apparent in his tale of a position with a car company at \$500 per month, later a trip on "government business," and finally his story to the newspapers of his wife's running away with \$1,600 of his savings.

In addition to his lying, Mr. Mathews was a confirmed wanderer, drifting rapidly from Arkansas to Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, Illinois and Texas. He was irritable and easily insulted. One day he went to the Family Welfare Society and told a wild tale about being kicked out of the City Hospital. He was so wrought up that he sat down and cried; it took an hour or more to quiet him. One physician reported that he was probably



paranoiac. In addition there were some physical defects—teeth, nose and throat. But in spite of all these difficulties, Mr. Mathews was robust in appearance and presented a good “front.”

*Minnie Stranic*, aged forty-six, was posing as Mr. Mathews' second wife. Her parents, who were Polish by birth, died when she was fourteen, and she was reared by an aunt in Pittsburgh. She had a four-year-old girl by a former “husband” but no children by Mr. Mathews. It is not known just where or when she “picked him up,” perhaps in Chicago shortly after the death of his wife. She was a waitress by trade, and, like many other restaurant workers, changed jobs very frequently. She was neat in appearance, a “fair” housekeeper and seemed good to the children. But she was thoroughly dishonest and sexually immoral. A Wassermann (blood test) showed her to be syphilitic, but she refused to be treated for this. She claimed to have contracted this disease from her “husband” who had got it from his “first” wife, who got it from her former husband who was “a very wild man.” After living two years with Mr. Mathews, Minnie ran away with another man.

*Tessie*, aged fifteen, was feeble-minded, anaemic, had diseased tonsils and congenital syphilis.

*John*, aged twelve, was retarded in school, needed tonsillectomy and had congenital syphilis.

*Verna*, aged seven, had just finished the first grade; she needed tonsillectomy and had congenital syphilis.

*Alice Stranic*, aged four, had bowel trouble, needed tonsillectomy, and had congenital syphilis.

*Diagnostic Summary.*—The summary prepared in 1922 reads in part as follows:

#### *Difficulties:*

1. Dishonesty of man and wife.
2. Difficulty of getting record of family on account of man's aliases.
3. Man's inability to hold a job.
4. Man's mental condition.

5. Lack of cooperation.
6. Irregular school attendance.
7. Mother working from home.

*Assets:*

1. Man returned borrowed money.
2. Man can be persuaded to follow right course for a short time.
3. Woman's neatness and work record. (One employer had spoken well of her.)
4. Liking for good house.

*Plan to Date:*

1. Generous relief.
2. Insistence on clinic care for children.
3. Moving into better quarters and location.
4. Use of Juvenile Court.

*Future Plan:*

1. Verifying everything, if possible.
2. Cutting relief to minimum.
3. Using compulsory methods to force treatment if necessary.
4. Continued investigation.

*Treatment.*—A fundamental, though unsuccessful part of the treatment was the constant effort against great odds to discover the facts about this family. Many false clues were run down, but few things aside from the medical diagnosis were definitely established.

Relief was given in considerable quantities—groceries, milk, rent, shoes, clothing and some cash. Special gifts were made at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Numerous agencies cooperated in the effort to work out some constructive plan for the Mathews family—school visitors, truant officers, a day nursery, Y.W.C.A., Juvenile Court and probation officers, two children's institutions, visiting nurse, two hospitals, a dispensary, city physician and two employment bureaus—fourteen in one city besides the Confidential Exchange. In addition the social agen-



cies of at least five other cities had dealings with the Mathews or helped the Family Welfare Society in the first city to gather significant information.

There was also much direct personal service to the family. Repeated and persistent efforts were made to induce them to have necessary medical attention for the children. Explanations and advice were patiently and sometimes skillfully offered. Conferences were held, plans were made, time and energy were spent even more freely than money.

*Results and Outlook.*—To what end was all this effort expended? John for a time was in an institution for older boys where he was making good progress when his father took him away and both disappeared from the city. Minnie Stranic took Alice when she eloped with her new paramour. The other two children were made wards of the Juvenile Court and committed to a public institution. All of the children received some treatment for syphilis, but it is doubtful whether they are cured or not. Truly the outlook is not very hopeful. Tessie and Verna may come out all right, but the rest of the family is headed in the opposite direction.

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Had we been writing a dozen years ago, we should very likely have used the term "insanity" in the title to this chapter. Perhaps we might use it even now with as much justification as attaches to some other words we have employed—for example, poverty, sickness, "difficult" children, disabled persons; but there is this difference: these other terms are commonly recognized as being quite general, while to many people the word "insanity" implies something more specific. As a matter of fact, however, to call a person "insane" is to give no more definite information than if we should say that he had a cough. In the latter case he might have bronchitis, laryngitis, pneumonia, pulmonary tuberculosis, asthma or any one of a number of other diseases. In the former case the information would be no more definite. In ordinary usage the term "insanity" is made to cover a wide range of ailments from

those mild disorders of persons whom we call "queer" to the complete and permanent break-down of advanced cases of paresis (popularly known as "softening of the brain"). Strictly speaking, "insanity" is a legal term and defines a patient's legal status rather than his mental condition. For example, a person is not technically "insane" until he has been declared so by a court, and a "cured" patient, discharged from a state hospital, would still be "insane" until his full legal rights were restored through court action. There is a great deal yet to be learned about the entire field of mental diseases and many charlatans and faddists play upon our common ignorance. Hence it behooves us as laymen to be exceedingly modest in our pretensions and exceedingly tentative in our interpretations.

**Organic Diseases of the Nervous System.**—It is customary to divide mental diseases into two major divisions, organic and functional. The former term implies impairment of the tissues of some organ in the nervous system; the latter signifies a disturbance in the mental organization of the patient. In actual practice it is not easy to make so clear-cut a distinction as this, partly because the patient's trouble may be both organic and functional and partly because diagnosis is difficult at best. However, it has been found profitable to deal with some cases on the supposition that they involve injury to the structure of the nervous system, while others are handled successfully on the assumption that the trouble lies not in what the nerves are but in what they do. "If the main cause is organic, only physical means can cure it; but if the trouble is functional, no amount of medicine or surgery, diet or rest, will touch it."<sup>1</sup>

The organic group consists of cases in which there is: (1) what the medical people call a pathological process, having its primary seat in the central nervous system, (2) an injury of the brain which is secondary to a disease in another part of the body, and (3) an injury to the brain

<sup>1</sup> Jackson, J. A., and Salisbury, H. M., *Outwitting Our Nerves*, p. 12.



due to poisons taken into the body. The first subdivision includes such diseases as general paresis ("softening of the brain," due to syphilis), brain tumor, "hardening of the arteries of the brain," senile dementia and injury to the brain as from a blow on the head. It is possible that Mr. Mathews, Mr. Jamison and Mr. Newton belong in this same general category, although it is of course impossible to tell without having access to their medical records. The second division of organic disorders includes the delirium which frequently accompanies fever, mental disturbances which are caused by disorders of the endocrine system (glands of internal secretion) and mental difficulties which sometimes attend focal infections of the teeth or tonsils. The third division includes the effects of alcoholism, drug addiction, and metallic poisons such as lead and mercury. Treatment of this entire group of mental disorders is largely a matter of internal medicine with attention centered upon the underlying physical diseases.

**Functional Disorders.**—The second major division of mental diseases is commonly described by the adjective functional, because no accompanying organic disorders have been demonstrated. Since there is no known anatomical basis, they must be considered from a psychological viewpoint. This does not necessarily mean that some physical condition which causes the mental disturbance will never be found, but it does compel the practitioner to proceed as though the difficulty were one of behavior and not of organic structure. Interestingly, many excellent results have been achieved by psychiatrists operating on this basis. There are two important subdivisions of the functional disorders: (1) those in which recovery without defect occurs and (2) those which tend to become chronic or involve deterioration or, at best, show improvement with permanent defects. The cases with the more hopeful outlook are those in which the trouble is chiefly in the emotional field, including what the psychiatrists call manic-depressive psychoses (alternating extremes of elation and depression) and involutional melancholia (mental disturbance accompanying "change of life"). The second division, in which

the outlook is much less hopeful, includes dementia praecox (a disorder frequently beginning in adolescence and involving delusions and hallucinations) and paranoia (progressive development of a delusional system). Among the causal factors which seem to be involved in the functional disorders are worry, grief, shock, persistent failure, overstimulation from unusual success, economic depression, sex conflict, family troubles, etc. Such mental and social factors as these probably lower the patient's vitality, reduce his immunity to infection and produce other important physical disturbances. The loss of appetite and of sleep which may be the physical concomitants of the emotional reactions indicated may possibly affect the ductless glands and in other ways involve organic disturbances of which we have as yet no definite knowledge. But the significant thing about these functional disturbances is that they are in many cases being treated successfully through the redirection of attention, the development of new interests, the removal of friction with other people, the provision of opportunities for reasonably successful effort and a balanced satisfaction of the normal wishes or desires of the individual person.

**Mental Disorders Reinforcing or Simulating Physical Invalidism.**—Within the major group of functional disturbances there are a number of "mental disorders reinforcing or simulating physical invalidism."<sup>2</sup> These psychoneuroses, as the psychiatrists call them, are divided into three kinds, neurasthenia, psychasthenia and hysteria. Neurasthenia is marked by a tired feeling that comes on after relatively little exertion and is frequently worse on arising than on going to bed. This fatigue interferes with the power of concentration and worries the patient a great deal. It is often accompanied by depression and lack of control over the expression of the emotions. Along with these symptoms there are often aches and pains of various kinds, disturbances of the appetite, and insomnia. The central characteristic of neurasthenia is fear. This fear

<sup>2</sup> Myerson, A., in *A Mental Health Primer*, pp. 9-14.



may manifest itself as worry about things in general or, more specifically, worry about the patient's own health.

Psychasthenia is, to the layman's eyes at least, very similar to neurasthenia, but in this case the physical symptoms are either not so marked or else are over-shadowed by mental symptoms—fears of various kinds, obsessive ideas and doubts, more or less absurd impulsions and habits and great difficulty in making up one's mind. Hysteria is even more difficult to describe than the other two. It involves an emotional instability, an "egotistic, easily wounded nature craving sympathy and respect, admiration and achievement, but unable legitimately to earn them." There are also in many cases queer disturbances in the field of bodily sensation and a sort of paralysis, with disorders of consciousness ranging from fainting spells to trances.

Among the factors which may contribute to this group of nervous and mental disorders are, on the one hand, such physical conditions as may follow exhausting illness, prolonged exposure, excessive fatigue, surgical operation or difficult child-birth. On the other hand, there are mental situations in which fear arises suddenly and with overpowering force, as on the battle-field or in a dangerous position in industry. There seems also to be in almost every case an inner conflict between opposing desires which the person is not able to harmonize. "Literally, secretly or otherwise, he is a house divided against himself, de-energized by fear, disgust, revolt and conflict." Because these are "essentially social diseases which depend for their existence upon the maladjustment of the individual to his social surroundings,"<sup>3</sup> the program of treatment must center about the restoration of wholesome relationships with other people.

**Incipient and Mild Cases of Mental Disorder.**—"Mental hygiene is not concerned merely with those serious forms of mental disorder which require treatment in state hospitals; it is concerned with those other forms of mental disorders which do not necessarily mean the removal of the individual from his ordinary social environment. A disorder is a

<sup>3</sup> White, W. A., *Principles of Mental Hygiene*, p. 229.

mental disorder if its roots are mental. A headache indicates a mental disorder if it comes because one is dodging something disagreeable. A pain in the back is a mental disorder if its persistence is due to discouragement and a feeling of uncertainty and a desire to have sick benefit, rather than to put one's back into one's work. Sleeplessness is a mental disorder if its basis lies in personal worries and emotional tangles. Many mental reactions are indications of poor mental health, although they are not usually classified as mental disorders. Discontent with one's environment may be a mental disorder, if its cause lie, not in some external situation, but in personal failure to deal with one's emotional problems. Suspicion, distrust, misinterpretation, are mental disorders when they are the disguised expression of repressed longings, into which the patient has no clear insight. Stealing sometimes indicates a mental disorder, the odd expression of underlying conflicts in the patient's nature. The feeling of fatigue sometimes represents, not overwork, but discouragement, inability to meet situations, lack of interest in the opportunities available. Unsociability, marital incompatibility, alcoholism, an aggressive and embittered social attitude, may all indicate a disorder of the mental balance, which may be open to modification. Acute phenomena characterized by unreasoning emotional reactions, such as lynching and other mob reactions, waves of popular suspicion sweeping over a country, may be looked upon as transitory disorders. The same factors that are involved in these familiar reactions play an important part in the development of insanity."<sup>4</sup>

These less marked cases of mental disorder appear in every walk of life. The following instances discovered in the course of a mental hygiene survey in industry indicate some of their manifestations.<sup>5</sup>

Man who thought he could not do his job, and was found to be worrying about the headaches of his wife, also an employe. When given assurance that his wife would be transferred to a position more favorable to her health, he made good.

Girl who could concentrate only until an early hour of the

<sup>4</sup> Campbell, C. McFie, in *Men. Hyg.*, 5: 470.

<sup>5</sup> Jarrett, Mary C., in *Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk.*, 1920, pp. 338-339.



afternoon. Every few weeks she would get wild and leave her work, saying she could not stand it another moment. Her problem was solved by putting her on two different jobs and changing her work every day at noon.

Man who occasionally stops work to sing and preach; suddenly stops, and with a laugh goes back to work.

Man laid off in slack season after fifteen years of employment, has such an unfavorable reputation that it will be hard for him to find another job. Talks continually, is suspicious, thinks everybody against him, and has given some reason to question his honesty.

Foreman, a high-strung man, in whose department all the employes seem tense and irritable.

Colored laborer who would dress up once or twice a month on Saturday in white trousers, frock coat, and silk hat, and walk up and down main street of the works. On that day he would not report for work, but otherwise was a satisfactory employe.

**Causation Re-analyzed.**—While we have been dealing all along with causal factors in our description of various nervous and mental disorders, it seems wise to reconsider them in their inter-relations. We have noted the part played by such physical conditions as syphilis, hardening of the arteries in the brain, injury to the brain as from a blow or fall, disorders of the glands of internal secretion, chronic infections and poisoning from alcohol or drugs. On the other hand we have observed the influence of fear, worry, grief, shock, failure, success, family friction, business depression, and a host of other mental and social factors. Some students and practitioners emphasize the former set, others the latter. A few are inclined to stress one type of cause to the exclusion of all others. But in general it is recognized that very different combinations of factors may underlie very similar manifestations of nervous and mental disorder. It is also pretty generally accepted that causation in any given case is not single and simple, but multiple and complex. Indeed, we find here one more bit of evidence that in understanding any human experience it is necessary to see not merely the various elements which enter into it, but to view the situation as a whole.

. . . One may consider a number of contingencies. For instance, it is not unlikely that a notably defective ancestry may

reduce an individual's resistance to such a minimum that the first environmental thrust is sufficient immediately to bend the outer circle of normality into unreality or a psychosis. At times the process is seemingly gradual and a long period of accumulated stresses, both physical and mental, are required slowly to diminish the solidity of the defense zone and curve it toward unreality. Again, it is not unlikely that the close chronological sequence of strains and the time of their occurrence may prove too much for the amount of resistance available at a given period. If separated by an interval of time, they may be turned aside. . . . Thus, by varying the type, severity, and time of appearance of the precipitating situations, increasing their number, or arranging them in close chronological sequence, one is able theoretically to diminish resistance to the vanishing point.<sup>6</sup>

**Extent of Nervous and Mental Diseases.**—From the preceding discussion it must be obvious that countless cases of nervous and mental diseases remain undiagnosed, and hence escape any census which may be taken. About the only index we have of the extent of these maladies is the number who are cared for in institutions or treated at psychiatric clinics. A preliminary statement of the United States Bureau of the Census indicates that on January 1, 1923, there were nearly 300,000 patients "on the books" of 525 hospitals for mental disease and psychopathic wards of general hospitals. These same institutions received during 1922 more than 125,000 new or returned patients. The steady growth in the number and proportion of persons receiving such care is indicated in the following table.

NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF PATIENTS  
*In Hospitals for Mental Diseases in the United States.*<sup>7</sup>

Year	Approximate No. of patients	Patients per 100,000 of the general population
1880	41,000	82
1890	74,000	118
1904	150,000	184
1910	188,000	204
1918	240,000	230
1922	290,000	260

<sup>6</sup> Strecker, E. A., in *Men. Hyg.*, 7: 283.

<sup>7</sup> Adapted from Pollock, H. M., and Furbush, Edith, *Annual Census of the Insane*, etc., *Men. Hyg.*, 3: 78-107; and from a statement released from newspapers April 15, 1924, by U. S. Census Bureau.



It is customary to regard these figures as conclusive proof that the incidence of nervous and mental diseases is rapidly increasing. There may be such an increase, but no such conclusion follows from these statistics alone. Some of the reasons are these. The states of Massachusetts and New York had in 1920 the largest proportions of mental patients, while Alabama and Arkansas had the smallest proportions. Now it is well known that the first named states have longer and more adequately provided facilities for the care of mentally sick persons than have those last named. Hence institutionalization may be taken as a measure of public sentiment quite as legitimately as of the prevalence of disease.

### **Social Significance of Nervous and Mental Diseases.—**

To the tax-payer one of the most significant aspects of these diseases is the ever mounting cost of caring for their victims. The cost of maintaining our hospitals for mental disease in the United States is estimated at about \$75,000,000 each year,<sup>8</sup> and the total annual economic cost is placed at more than \$200,000,000. Over one-eighth of the expenditures of some states is for the so-called insane; and in a few states this expense is greater than any other except that for education. Moreover, the whole social cost of these diseases is due not alone to the 300,000 who are at any given time to be found in mental hospitals and psychopathic wards. There are innumerable others whose efficiency and happiness are impaired by minor disorders which may eventually develop into more serious conditions. These seemingly insignificant ailments also affect immediately the patient's relations to other people. This statement applies to the folks frequently spoken of as "peculiar," "cranky," "irritable," "moody," "disagreeable," etc.

The stories of Mr. Jamison<sup>9</sup> and of the Newton family<sup>10</sup> suggest some of the ways in which mental disorders enter into other human problems. Studies of prisoners in vari-

<sup>8</sup> Men. Hyg. Bul., Jan., 1923, p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Chap. X.

<sup>10</sup> Chap. IV.

ous penitentiaries and reformatories indicate that from 35 to 82 per cent of the inmates present nervous and mental abnormalities.<sup>11</sup> However, it is possible to draw erroneous conclusions from figures such as these. The markedly abnormal offender is more likely to be caught than is his "normal" brother. Being caught, he is less likely to be released or placed on probation. Hence there is a constant tendency to segregate in prisons the mentally sick and defective violators of the law. Similarly it may be shown that while nervous and mental diseases are by no means the primary, much less the sole, causes of alcoholism, drug addiction, prostitution and vagrancy, they do play an important rôle in many cases.

Until recently little attention has been paid to the relation of mental abnormality to industrial problems. But there is a growing body of evidence that those workers who are constantly stirring up trouble or changing jobs—when most of their fellows remain steadily at work and solve their difficulties through recognized channels such as collective bargaining—are nervously and mentally unwell. It is important, however, to distinguish between this statement and one frequently, but unfairly made, that all casual laborers and all labor "agitators" are mentally unbalanced. We have seen in an earlier chapter how men may be forced into irregular employment. We might also give examples of walking delegates, strike leaders and other "agitators" who have chosen quite calmly and deliberately to devote themselves to these means of improving admittedly bad working conditions. In so far as mental abnormalities are related to industrial unrest it is probably correct in many cases to ascribe both to the demoralizing uncertainty of employment, arbitrariness of foremen, insufficient wages and other irritating conditions so common in industry today.

**Treatment of the Mentally Sick.**—In order that we may appreciate the revolutionary changes that are taking place in the treatment and prevention of mental disorders we

<sup>11</sup> Williams, Frankwood E., in *Mod. Med.*, 1: 604. See also *Men. Hyg. Bul.*, Jan., 1925.



need to understand the traditional methods which are even yet in vogue in many places. Under the older regime no attention was given to a nervous or mental patient until he became "violent" or menaced the safety and comfort of other people in very direct and obvious ways. Having thus reached in many cases an advanced stage of his disease, the patient was then arrested as a criminal and taken to jail where he might be locked in the cage with tramps, pick-pockets and burglars or perhaps isolated in a "padded cell." After a longer or shorter period he was taken to court and tried by a jury on a charge of being insane—about as sensible a procedure as arresting and trying a person for typhoid fever. If the jury returned a verdict of insane, the patient was taken by a deputy sheriff to a state or county asylum where he was usually shut in for the rest of his life. He was fed, clothed and housed somewhat after the fashion of an animal in the zoo. If he became obstreperous, he was put into a "strait-jacket" or other mechanical restraint. His keepers were usually ignorant men who secured their positions through political influence. All this rested on the tradition that "insanity" is a disgrace and not a disease.

Gradually there is taking place an important series of changes in response to the slow dissemination of the information being made available by modern psychology and psychiatry. Bit by bit the public is coming to realize that large numbers of mentally sick persons are not reached by the older procedure; that it is just as disastrous to allow nervous and mental diseases to pass from incipient to advanced stages as it is to let tuberculosis go unchecked; that institutional care is fearfully expensive and the cost is mounting every year; that it is possible to check the development of many disorders in their early stages with tremendous gain to the patient, his family, the community and the state.

One important unit in the modern program of treatment for the mentally sick is the psychiatric or mental health clinic. Such a clinic is usually best conducted as part of a general dispensary or of the outpatient department of a

general hospital. Thereby it is most likely to reach those who need its services, for they usually come with some physical complaint. The purposes of the psychiatric clinic are: (1) diagnosis, (2) treatment without interruption of economic and social relations, (3) continued treatment after leaving a hospital, (4) research into the causes and treatment of mental disorders.

I know of no way in which the state can do more to care for the mental health of its citizens than by well-organized out-patient clinics. Not only can the maximum number of patients be treated at the minimum cost, but contacts can be made with the psychiatrist and his organization during the early and incipient stage of their disease. When treatment is most hopeful, assistance is made available and at a time when the patient is still capable of appreciating his own needs. Treatment is rendered in a manner that makes it acceptable and compatible with the patient's social and economic obligations. It permits him to carry on his work, and to continue to dwell in the community, and be rehabilitated in the environment in which he must continue to live, in order that he may play a part in the social scheme of things. He learns to carry his burden, not by laying it down and retiring to an artificial environment, but by developing new methods, minimizing wasted effort, permitting someone else to help in eliminating irritative environmental factors, and thereby overcoming worry and anxiety that is out of all proportion to the situation. Whatever the solution may be, if it is achieved without hospitalization, much has been accomplished for the individual and the state.<sup>12</sup>

Another unit is the psychopathic ward in the general hospital. This relationship to the general hospital is desirable for the same reasons that it seems wise to make the mental health clinic a part of a general dispensary. But for more specialized service and especially to meet the needs of patients who may live in small towns and rural districts, neither of these agencies is likely to be available. For them there have been developed traveling clinics such as those administered by the Massachusetts Department of Mental Diseases, and psychopathic hospitals like that connected with the University of Michigan. The psychopathic hospital receives all sorts of mental patients for first care, examina-

<sup>12</sup> Thom, D. A., in *Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk.*, 1922: 376.



tion and observation. It gives intensive treatment to incipient, acute and curable cases. It is often a sort of court of appeal for the diagnosis of conditions particularly difficult to understand. It usually has an especially capable staff because the hospital is a center for teaching and research. Here future physicians, nurses and social workers may get their insight into mental disorders. Here specialists are trained for the care of the mentally sick—psychiatrists, special nurses, occupational therapists, attendants and psychiatric social workers.

The psychiatric social workers are an illustration of the marked specialization that has been taking place in social work as well as in medicine. We might speak of them as a sub-species of medical social workers, who are a species of social case workers, who in turn are a genus of that large family known as social workers. In 1920 a committee which met under the auspices of the National Committee for Mental Hygiene defined the function of the psychiatric social worker as follows: “(1) to facilitate admission to hospital or clinic and continuance of treatment; (2) to bring to the physician personal and social data helpful in arriving at a diagnosis and in outlining treatment; (3) to assist in carrying out treatment; (4) to interpret hospital and clinic to patient, family, and organizations of the community; (5) to make social investigations contributing to medico-research.”<sup>13</sup> These psychiatric social workers are important members of the staff of every mental health clinic, psychopathic hospital and state hospital for mental diseases.

While all these innovations have been occurring, what has happened to the older “insane asylums”? A good many of them are being changed into hospitals for the patients who require extended institutional care and treatment. But they are no longer modified prisons. Patients are conducted to them by trained attendants instead of by ignorant sheriffs’ deputies. In an increasing number of cases there has been no formal court hearing; but the judge “in chambers” has consulted with psychiatrists, social

<sup>13</sup> Jarrett, Mary, in *Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk.*, 1921: 381.

workers and relatives and quietly signed commitment papers, or the patient has gone quite voluntarily to the hospital just as he would if he had appendicitis. Especially if the patient has first been to a clinic, there is a good deal of information immediately available for the state hospital staff. However, in the state hospital he is re-examined and continuously studied during the course of his treatment. In the newer hospitals there is little use of mechanical restraint and sedatives. By hydrotherapy, functional re-education, occupational training and recreation many patients are steadied, their attention is redirected and their mental life is reorganized. While there are many for whom science has not yet found a cure, there are many others who are prepared to take their part again in the life of the community. But instead of being turned out abruptly to make their way alone, patients are sent out on parole, after a careful study to discover situations in which they are likely to get along successfully, and with continued guidance until they seem to have effected a complete readjustment. This "after-care" may be administered directly from the state hospital or through a psychiatric clinic, a major role usually being played by the social workers.

**Prevention.**—The New York State Charities Aid Association published in 1911 a pamphlet entitled "Why Should Anyone Go Insane?" In recent years increasing attention has been given to stopping nervous and mental disorders at their sources. Since prevention depends so much upon early discovery and removal of conditions which may break down mental health, our problem becomes one of planning ways and means for the identification of potential victims. Through what institutions do large numbers of people pass in such fashion that examination might be practicable? There are two, the public schools and industrial establishments, which occupy an important portion of the time of a very large part of the population. It appears that a program of prevention can best be developed around the school and industry. In both institutions this means the employment of specialists to



educate the general staff in recognition of significant symptoms, to see that thorough diagnoses are made whenever conduct problems arise and to make such adjustments as will remove the source of trouble. We have already seen <sup>14</sup> how the mental hygiene of childhood is being promoted through visiting teachers, habit and child guidance clinics. Important educational work with teachers and parents is being carried on by the National Committee for Mental Hygiene and the various state mental hygiene societies. This includes the distribution of literature, lecture courses, surveys and exhibits. But the industrial part of the program has hardly started; it is here that some of the most interesting achievements of the future may be anticipated.

In so far as mental disorders are due to syphilis, their reduction depends upon the control of sex vice. In so far as they are bound up with the taking of poisons into the body, they call for the checking of alcoholism and drug addiction and the modification of such industrial processes as expose the worker to mercury, phosphorus and lead poisoning. Other physical conditions, such as focal infections of teeth or tonsils, which contribute to mental breakdown, bring us back once more to a general health program for all the people. Fundamentally this is a problem in popular education.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Visit a mental health clinic at a time when the psychiatrist in charge is free to describe both the types of patients who come and the working of the clinic. Pay special attention to the part played by the social worker in diagnosis and treatment.
2. Visit a psychopathic hospital or psychopathic ward of a general hospital and report on:
  - a. Buildings and equipment
  - b. Organization and administration
  - c. Staff—psychiatrists, nurses, social workers, clerks
  - d. Admission and dismissal of patients
  - e. The processes involved in diagnosis
  - f. Treatment—medical, psychological, social

<sup>14</sup> Chap. VII.

3. Visit a hospital that cares for mental patients over a long period, and make a similar report.
4. Write abstracts of the laws of your state concerning the care and treatment of patients suffering from nervous and mental diseases. Note use of the words "insane" and "lunacy," commitment procedure, transportation of patients, sterilization.
5. Discover what preventive work is being done in your home district and state. Note especially, mental hygiene society, child-guidance and habit clinics, mental hygiene surveys, lecture courses.
6. Clip all articles concerning the mentally sick which appear in your local newspapers for a period of one to three months.

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## CHAPTER XXVI

### MENTAL DEFICIENCY

#### JOB AND MATTHEW CALKINS<sup>1</sup>

The ancestors of Job and Matthew Calkins, known in the region as of "mountaineer" stock, have for more than five generations lived as squatters in the Ramapo Hills of New York State. The men are characterized as rugged, powerful of physique, and generally free from disease. Their habitations were crude shacks in remote mountain pockets, and their chief occupations chopping cordwood, cutting timber and bark, weaving baskets, and carving scoops, ladles and similar domestic implements out of hard wood obtained in the forest. When the heavy timber was gone, and the brickyards which they had been supplying with fuel began to substitute oil for wood, and the village store no longer traded provisions for their baskets and trays, their principal source of livelihood failed and idleness and strong drink supervening induced wide-spread degeneracy among them. The farmers of the region made and fermented "applejack" in large quantities and dispensed it with calculated liberality among their helpers at harvest time. Drunkenness became endemic among the Calkins, who have been notorious for their intemperance ever since. . . .

The mother on account of her own obvious limitations has exerted only the most feeble influence on the intellectual and moral development of Job and Matthew. Indeed, by virtue of her ignorance and superstition she has been at least indirectly responsible for their highly

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts from a social history prepared by Paul Wander, formerly social worker in the psychiatric clinic at Sing Sing Prison. The men described in the record had been convicted of murder.

irregular school attendance, their social isolation and retardation, their industrial inefficiency, and their moral immaturity. The same general indictment applies to the father as well, whose gentle, easy-going manner and lack of firmness disqualified him for the exercise of necessary parental authority. . . .

Job is described as tractable, docile and easily governed, while Matthew was inclined to rough fun, "cutting up," and lawlessness, especially outside the home. Neither played much: Job less than Matthew, nor did they mingle freely with other boys of the neighborhood. Job was quiet and somewhat seclusive, Matthew more lively and sociable. They found few companions among their schoolfellows and seem to have made no fast friends. Being required by their parents to work from early childhood, they had little time for play, and what they had they spent at home. Among strangers, especially among those of higher social and mental grade, they have always felt ill-at-ease and awkward, and apparently for this reason Matthew preferred the uncritical society of children younger than himself.

Aside from being backward and bashful in manner, Job and Matthew were unattractive to other children by reason of their neglected if not disreputable appearance and uncouth speech, and were avoided and looked down upon by most of their schoolmates and neighbors as belonging to the despised "mountaineer" folk. Matthew, in particular, felt the force of this ostracism at school, and neither he nor Job was admitted to any genuine association with children from families of more progressive standards of living and culture. As a natural consequence they turned for the satisfaction of their sociability needs to their own poor kinship circle.

The family has never known a fixed abode. For generations the ancestors, including the parents of Job and Matthew, squatted in mountain pockets until dislodged by the passing of the woodland into private ownership in the form of large estates. Within the lifetime of Job and Matthew alone the family has migrated some twenty times. . . .



Their usual habitations were rough shacks, sometimes constructed by themselves, and providing most unsanitary and unwholesomely congested quarters. Except in one or two instances, where the family temporarily occupied as many as three or four rooms, they have never enjoyed decent privacy or essential sanitary and household conveniences. Bathtubs, water-closets and running water have been practically unknown luxuries at all times. All water has to be carried; sometimes long distances. Toilet facilities are most primitive. . . .

Even though the family denies having suffered acute want for any length of time, they admitted that "it took all they could earn to keep alive," and there is abundant evidence pointing to a chronic state of want, a wretched hand-to-mouth existence, a constant tendency to undernutrition, and periodic semi-starvation. And this abiding condition of poverty may fairly be set down as due less to their industrial inefficiency and correspondingly low wages as such, than to their prevailing shiftlessness and improvident habits, and their lack of economic intelligence.

On several occasions, under severe economic stress, the family or some of its members have so far overcome their native inertia as to migrate in search of an improved livelihood. Usually they have followed the invitation of relatives established elsewhere, who have reported better wages or opportunities of employment. In several instances, on the other hand, notably in recent years, they have been tided over periods of special hardship by securing credit from their employers. Any other available sources of relief, both private and public, have been utilized, though not until absolutely necessary to maintain existence. . . .

The brothers have found their pleasures chiefly and almost solely in hunting, fishing and strong drink, the last of these seeming to yield them the keenest satisfaction of all. They derived genuine enjoyment out of getting thoroughly "soused," and called this experience "having a good time." They rarely applied themselves to hunting or fishing with sufficient zest to depend upon it largely for food: seemed to lack the necessary power of concentration

even in this direction of their primary play interests. Incidental to their quest for game or liquor, they also exhibited a taste for roving, but they seldom absented themselves from home for more than a day or two at a time. A predilection for "loafing" is also to be noted. Job and Matthew and their older brothers were practically confined for their sociable pleasures to loitering and drinking with older idle men and boys. For the sake of this diversion they would often leave their work in the middle of the week, and on the pretext of going hunting or of buying groceries in the village would spend their money on beer and whisky, usually returning home drunk. They consistently refrained from attending any parties, dances, picnics, or neighborhood gatherings of any kind: partly, no doubt, owing to their lack of presentable clothing, but in part also because of their inherent lack of sociability and their general unpopularity. They are said to feel no desire for such forms of recreation, nor for motion pictures, of which they have seen but few; doubtless a case of sour grapes. They know nothing of theaters, concerts, books, pictures, and next to nothing of magazines and newspapers. The only trace of the aesthetic appears in Matthew, who is credited with a fondness for making music on a harmonica. . . .

The family standards and morals in sex matters are so lax that it is difficult to speak of specific acts of immorality. The men, i.e., the young men of the family, are said to cohabit, largely regardless of marriage ties, with women of their own blood, and sometimes with girls as young as 13 and 14. When a child is born, they may arrange either voluntarily or by order of court to cover up the illegitimacy by formal marriage, and cases of bigamy are not unknown. The women, especially the feeble-minded ones, are quite as loose as the men. The presence of those of their children who were born out of wedlock cannot but affect unhappily the moral tone of their home life, although there seems to be no clear consciousness of wrong on the part of the parent. Little definite information can be gained regarding the sex life or habits of Job and Matthew, who seem



on the whole to have had little contact of any sort with women not of their own kin.

The scholastic career of Job and Matthew was irregular and abortive. Job seems to have attended school between the ages of 12 and 14—somewhat over two terms. Matthew entered at 8 or 10 and continued with numerous interruptions up to 16. . . .

Although Job's presence in school was relatively brief, it was sufficient to demonstrate his inability to progress in the primary grades; he has never learned to read or write even his own name. They are said to have forgotten from one day to the next what they were taught in school. They learned to copy the letters of the alphabet, but not to read them when written, nor to use them independently in words. Matthew likes to scrawl and draw and is considered something of a penman. He reached the third reader by the age of 16, while Job is believed by some to have attained to the second reader. Needless to say, neither betrayed any positive interest or aptitude in school except as noted above in the case of Matthew. As to their mathematical ability, one saloon-keeper affirms that they are apt to accept whatever change is returned to them without verifying the amount. It appears that their teachers, while in general kindly and encouraging with reference to the material and social handicaps of Job and Matthew, were inclined to be apathetic toward their intellectual difficulties, probably from a recognition of these as insuperable defects. . . .

Job and Matthew have never acquired any specialized occupation or industrial proficiency, but may be classed as agricultural laborers, most of their wage-earning lives having been spent on the farm. They began to work casually for pay as quite young children: "almost as early as they could walk" they were employed picking strawberries in the field at 25 cents and up per day. But not until the age of 10 or 12 did they work with any regularity for wages. Matthew worked considerably while still at school, assisting his elders on the farm. Beginning with 50 cents as a day's wage, they advanced by the time of reaching ma-

turity to \$1.50 per day, or nearly the current rate of agricultural wages. Now and then they have earned as high as \$2.00 and \$2.25 per day while employed on the state highway, erecting fences for the railroad, shoveling coal from cars, etc. But not being adapted to such labor on account of its orderly and continuous character, they rarely followed it for more than a few days together. They either lost such employment through drunkenness and irregularity in attendance, or were discharged on being discovered soldiering, or abandoned it as too exacting. They have held no industrial employment long enough to gain skill or advancement in it or to accumulate savings. The more primitive routine of farm and orchard, including as winter chores woodchopping, trimming trees, clearing brush, marked the level of their industrial capacity. . . .

A search for criminalistic antecedents in Job and Matthew's history fails to reveal any unambiguous evidence of an inherent disposition to criminal conduct of the type of which they have been convicted. So completely foreign to their normal character and behavior appeared the act of the murder of Henry Danziger, with the brutal mutilation accompanying it, that those who have been in a position to be most familiar with the everyday temper of the two found difficulty in believing them guilty. But certain traits, tendencies, circumstances, by no means all of which were admitted as evidence at the trial, throw at least an indirect light upon that otherwise anomalous event. In the first place, as is admitted by the district attorney in private conversation, both were "soused" when they committed the deed. They would never, in the private opinion of the trial judge, have committed or conceived of this murder, but for their profoundly intoxicated condition (in recognition of which fact Judge Tompkins saw fit to commute the verdict of first degree murder to one of second degree). There was neither plan nor premeditation nor any rational motive involved in the act. It is supposed that, staggering home from a carousal and meeting the old man, a stranger, said to be of a sour disposition, on the road, they struck him upon provocation of some kind, and



frightened by what they had done, pursued him into the woods and finished him with the barrel of Job's gun. In any case, the crime was perpetrated in a fit of madness, with Matthew probably playing a primary and Job an accessory rôle, though both were jointly and immediately implicated.

It appears that Job directly afterwards broke down and cried like a child, this reaction being not uncommon with him when he is in trouble. It is known, moreover, that he had eaten no regular meal for over 24 hours preceding the crime, and that the four glasses of beer and pint of whiskey taken on an empty stomach had weakened not only his powers of inhibition but his powers of independent locomotion as well.

Alongside of Job's phlegmatic and surly disposition, accentuated by the influence of alcohol, we have Matthew's tendency to mischief and aggression, similarly exaggerated by drink. It is admitted by the family and borne out by the statements of saloon-keepers that under liquor Matthew's childish and playful manner would readily change to one of boisterousness and folly, and that further irritation or offense might render him positively violent and dangerous. This underlying "temper" occasionally came to the surface even in the absence of intoxication, as was shown by the case of his savage attack on his school fellows at Haven; but it never assumed so vicious a character as to indicate criminality. Job, on the other hand, while slower to anger, is said to be even more ferocious when aroused. According to a very old man who was personally acquainted with their ancestors for several generations, while all these were heavy drinkers and fist-fights and drunken brawls were not uncommon among them, none are known to have committed deeds of violence and aggression. An isolated incident reported of Riley, the father, who is said in a drunken rage to have thrown an axe at his son, Sheridan, has not been verified and can scarcely be used.

Such minor offenses against law and public peace as would constitute the criminal record of Job and Matthew,

seem in almost every case complicated if not induced by intoxication. While exceedingly undignified, their conduct in the village was for the most part sufficiently peaceful not to land them in the local jail for disorderly conduct. The Justice of the Peace of S—— admits having heard complaints about them, but remembers no arrest on this score having been made. The attorney, however, who conducted Job's defense in the murder trial, recalls one instance of Job being locked up over night for boisterous conduct while drunk. Outside the village, at any rate, they were known to have quarreled among themselves, while intoxicated, and once fought a bloody battle with rocks on the public highway. When alone among strangers they were inclined to be timid and gentle, but in the company of their kind, and especially after drinking, would tend to grow bold, aggressive, and lawless in their relations to outsiders, ready to annoy neighbors of like social station or even to do them injury. One inoffensive old man in particular, a mountaineer like themselves, seems to have been their favorite victim. He endeavored not to give unnecessary provocation but on the contrary to avoid them when they appeared intoxicated. According to his story, he one day met Matthew on the road with one E. Without any warning or apparent reason, Matthew, who was drunk, struck the old man a violent blow behind the ear, almost knocking him down, and was only restrained by his companion from doing further harm.

The only recorded case of overt conflict with the law prior to the murder is one of disorderly conduct tried in June of last year by the local Justice of the Peace. Had this case been handled by the authorities with proper energy and intelligence, Job and Matthew would have been charged with felonious assault and promptly convicted. According to all reports, they went to L. in quest of a pint of whisky on a Sunday evening, in company with one E., a feeble-minded young alcoholic, whom they commissioned to secure the whisky for them at F.'s saloon, giving him a quarter to pay for it. When E. returned without whisky or money, they set upon him and beat and bruised him



unmercifully. When haled into court the next day, they were accompanied by nearly a dozen kinsmen, all of whom swore that they had been at home and in bed at the time this assault had taken place. The injured man having no witnesses, the perjured alibi of the defense was accepted and the case dismissed. Since then Riley, the father, has admitted to the deputy-sheriff that Job and Matthew did that deed. It is believed that they were in liquor when they did it, and the circumstance of their victim's defenselessness is likewise significant.

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In this case summary we have a glimpse of some of the conditions frequently associated with feeble-mindedness. Among them are economic inefficiency, alcoholism, sex vice, crime and social isolation. It is not easy to determine the extent to which any given behavior of such persons as Job and Matthew can legitimately be ascribed to their mental deficiency, and to what extent to the conditions under which they lived.

**Who is Feeble-minded?**—In the preceding chapter we were concerned with the various forms of nervous and mental breakdown or deterioration. In this present chapter our attention is directed upon early arrested development rather than upon destructive processes later in life. This distinction is not absolute, for numerous patients will exhibit both a congenital defect and a subsequent deterioration. Neither has it been agreed at what age the line should be drawn between what may be called arrested development and deterioration. However, in a general way, this distinction will be found helpful. So many different terms are used by students of this set of problems that it is important to make plain that for our present purposes feeble-mindedness, mental deficiency, and amentia will be regarded as synonymous. However, another set of terms frequently used as though they meant the same thing will in our discussion stand for quite different conditions. These terms are idiot, imbecile and moron.

In undertaking to define feeble-mindedness there are a

number of different approaches which may legitimately be utilized. Some students come at this problem from the standpoint of neurology. Thus, Tredgold says "The essential basis of amentia is an imperfect or arrested development of the cerebral neurones."<sup>2</sup> He does not, however, restrict himself to a neurological definition for he says in another place, "The condition is a psychological one, although the criterion is a social one, and we may accordingly define amentia as a state of restricted potentiality for, or arrest of, cerebral development, in consequence of which the person affected is incapable at maturity of so adapting himself to his environment or to the requirements of the community as to maintain existence independently of external support."<sup>3</sup> Very similar to this is the definition of the British Royal Commission in 1908, which defines mental deficiency as, "A state of mental defect from birth or from an early age, due to incomplete cerebral development, in consequence of which the person affected is unable to perform his duties as a member of society in the position of life to which he was born."<sup>4</sup> The difficulty of using the neurological definition lies in the impossibility of diagnosis from that standpoint except through a post mortem examination. On the other hand, there are practical difficulties in the way of accepting the social test, because anyone's ability to get along in the world is dependent upon the situations in which he finds himself quite as much as upon his own native ability. On the other hand, it is evident that "the practical problem is one of social competency." But we need to be a bit careful in using this term. Many persons seem to mean by it, conformity to established modes of conduct. We may well wonder whether this does not overemphasize one aspect of social adjustment. Of course there must be a measure of conformity in language, traffic regulations and a host of other customs if people are to live successfully together, but divergence, specialization and the development of unique traits and capacities may

<sup>2</sup> Tredgold, A. F., *Mental Deficiency*, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> Tredgold, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Healy, Wm., *The Individual Delinquent*, p. 449.



be quite as important as conformity in the life of a group. Perhaps a better statement can be made in terms of *capacity for adjustment*.

There is, however, still another sort of definition and a corresponding method of diagnosis. It is based on the concept "mental age" which assumes certain uniformities of mental development corresponding more or less exactly with chronological age. As a matter of fact, mental age appears to be rather an arbitrary concept, analogous to the term horse-power as used in physics. In ordinary usage persons whose mental age does not exceed twelve years, that is to say, persons beyond this chronological age who cannot pass the tests appropriate to their years, are rated as feeble-minded. The same idea is also expressed in what is called the "intelligence quotient," which is the ratio of mental age to chronological age. Davies has suggested that "the nearest approach to a satisfactory definition would combine both the psychological and social elements and indicate an intelligence quotient below a certain level plus a certain deficiency in other personality traits leading to social inefficiency, as determining factors in constituting mental defect."<sup>5</sup>

**Classification of Mental Defectives.**—Persons who are adjudged feeble-minded according to any of the definitions we have noted may be classified in a number of different ways, depending upon the point of view and primary interest of the student. Thus, Ireland divides the feeble-minded into various groups on the basis of pathological conditions in the nervous system and other parts of the body. Among his types are the microcephalic (those with abnormally small skull), the hydrocephalic (popularly known as having "water on the brain" and an enlarged skull), paralytic (due to infantile paralysis or other diseases), traumatic (due to mechanical injury of the brain) etc. Barr has made an entirely different classification of the feeble-minded based on their educational possibilities. He characterizes them accordingly as requiring: (1) asylum care, (2) custodial life and perpetual guardianship, (3)

<sup>5</sup> Davies, S. P., *Social Control of the Feeble-minded*, p. 21.

long apprenticeship and colony life under protection, and (4) training for a place in the world.

A much more commonly used classification is that worked out by the British Royal Commission in 1908. This divides the mental defectives into three major groups, idiots, imbeciles and morons (this last is the corresponding American term instead of the one used by the British Commission). An idiot was defined as "a person so deeply defective in mind from birth, or from an early age, that he is unable to guard himself against common physical dangers." An imbecile was defined as "one who, by reason of mental defect existing from birth, or from an early age, is unable to earn his own living, but is capable of guarding himself against common physical dangers." A moron was defined as "one who is capable of earning a living under favorable circumstances, but is incapable from mental defect, existing from birth, or from an early age, (a) of competing on equal terms with his normal fellows; or (b) of managing himself and his affairs with ordinary prudence."<sup>6</sup>

In the United States there has been developed still another classification, closely related, however, to that of the British Commission. This classes as idiots those whose mental age ranges up to two years, as imbeciles those with mental age of three to seven and as morons those with mental age of eight to twelve. This last is the simplest and most easily used of all; it would be the most valuable but for the fact that the feeble-minded are not so simply and easily classified. Like "normal" folk they manifest a great many individual variations in mental equipment involving not only general intelligence, but special abilities and disabilities, the capacity for output, personality make-up and mental content.<sup>7</sup>

**How Many are Feeble-minded?**—One of the earliest attempts to measure the extent of mental deficiency was made by the British Royal Commission, which estimated that there were in England and Wales in 1906 about 140,000 feeble-minded persons out of a total population of

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Healy, Wm., *Individual Delinquent*, p. 449.

<sup>7</sup> Bronner, Augusta F., in *Mental Hygiene*, 4: 521-536.



35,000,000. This meant a ratio of 4 per thousand or one in every 250 persons. The Commission further estimated that out of 100 mental defectives, 6 would be idiots, 18 imbeciles and 76 morons. They discovered a slight preponderance of males—a ratio of 6 to 5. In the United States there have been numerous studies of limited groups and estimates covering the country as a whole. School surveys in California indicated that from 1 to 4 per cent of the school children in various counties were feeble-minded.<sup>8</sup> A study made jointly by the United States Public Health Service and the Federal Children's Bureau in Delaware found about 250 feeble-minded persons in a population of 50,000. This would be one-half of one per cent.<sup>9</sup> The results of other studies give us ratios ranging from 1 to 136, down to 1 to 262.<sup>10</sup> Thus there is a wide variation in the findings, which leads us to be very dubious about any estimates which may be offered, especially those whose numbers are rather large. The lax methods employed in numerous studies are indicated by the following statement which appears in the report of an investigation in Ohio. "In general no formal psychological tests were given, but the suspected cases were judged on a sociological basis with the possession of ability or inability to maintain existence accepted as the essential difference between the normal and feeble-minded person."<sup>11</sup>

Some of the most sensational findings which have come from any source are those presented by the psychologists who conducted examinations of drafted men during the recent War. These seemed to show that if everyone, whose mental age according to the tests was less than 13 years, should be classed as feeble-minded, then nearly one-half (47.3 per cent) of the white drafted men and nearly nine-tenths (89 per cent) of the colored drafted men were feeble-minded.<sup>12</sup> Such amazing figures as these are obviously so

<sup>8</sup> *Surveys in Mental Deviation*, p. 28.

<sup>9</sup> U. S. Chil. Bur., Pub. No. 48, p. 37.

<sup>10</sup> Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 44.

<sup>11</sup> Sessions, Mina A., *The Feeble-minded in a Rural County in Ohio*, p. 5.

<sup>12</sup> Yerkes, R. M., in *Mem. Nat. Acad. Sci.*, 15: 790. Quoted and discussed by Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

extreme as to make the intelligent discussion of feeble-mindedness impossible. Over against such tremendous numbers as are implied in the results of the army tests may be placed the actual number of feeble-minded persons in institutions, which was in 1922 less than 50,000 for the entire United States.<sup>13</sup> However, these figures are no more an indication of the actual number of feeble-minded persons than are those just cited. The varying numbers of institutional cases in different states suggest that they are an index of public sentiment rather than of the number of needy mental defectives. From these many divergent reports and estimates it is all but impossible to draw any conclusion, but we may consider ourselves conservative if we assume that there are 500,000 mental defectives in the United States. This would be roughly one-half of one per cent of the total population. It is likely, however, that the number requiring institutionalization is smaller than this, though by how much we cannot tell without a great deal more information than is now available.

**Where Mental Defectives Come From.**—Concerning the causation of feeble-mindedness there is almost as much divergence of opinion as concerning its extent. There are a number of bizarre theories; for example, that it is (1) "an uninterrupted transmission from our animal ancestry," (2) "an example of atavism or reversion to some earlier type from which we are descended," (3) a case of spontaneous variation. It is rather difficult to take the first two of these theories seriously for it seems quite unlikely that a race of people possessing the traits which characterize the feeble-minded should ever have succeeded in the struggle for existence and developed into the types we recognize as normal today. The third statement is no explanation at all, but merely a confession of ignorance.

A fourth theory and one deserving of careful consideration has been presented by Tredgold.<sup>14</sup> It is to the effect that feeble-mindedness may be traced most frequently to an

<sup>13</sup> Statement released for publication by U. S. Bur. Census, Apr. 15, 1924.

<sup>14</sup> Tredgold, *op. cit.*, Ch. III.



impairment of the germ plasm which is in turn due to some action of the environment. These pathological germinal variations, as he calls them, may be due to ancestral alcoholism, tuberculosis, syphilis and other similar causes. Tredgold believes that these account for perhaps 85 per cent of the cases of feeble-mindedness. The remaining 15 per cent he traces to what he calls somatic modifications (bodily changes) due to such diseases as scarlet fever, influenza, meningitis, etc., which produce lesions in the central nervous system, or due to some deficiency in the nutrition of cells in the central nervous system.

A considerable number of students of this problem have assumed that feeble-mindedness is a unit character, transmitted by direct heredity in accordance with the Mendelian principles. They have frequently added to this the belief that the numbers of the feeble-minded are rapidly increasing. The popularity of this doctrine is probably bound up with the re-discovery of the Mendelian "laws" of heredity, the Eugenics movement and the wide-spread use of the Binet-Simon method of testing intelligence. Since 1900 there have been studies of a number of notorious family groups in which there was considerable evidence that feeble-mindedness was transmitted as a unit trait from generation to generation with disastrous effects upon all concerned. More recently, however, it has become increasingly plain that feeble-mindedness is not a unit character, but is instead a composite term for a number of different kinds of deficiencies each of which may operate singly as a unit character, or the absence of one. It is also becoming increasingly clear that the selected families whose history has been given such wide publicity are not representative. Either they have been taken from the inmates of institutions who are usually confined because of the very fact of their low grade and troublesomeness, or they have been taken from isolated "pockets" where they have been handicapped by lack of opportunity, perhaps quite as much as by their native deficiency. In recent years psychiatric clinics and bureaus of child study in the public schools have brought to light a type of feeble-mindedness previously

almost unknown. Many of these come from homes of the better type and have parents who are quite intelligent. Careful study of their family history discloses no trace of hereditary taint. Clinical studies made by Dr. Fernald at Waverly, Massachusetts, and Dr. Potter at Letchworth Village, New York, indicate that at least half of the inmates of these institutions are of the non-hereditary type.<sup>15</sup> The examination of nearly two thousand feeble-minded persons at out-patient clinics of the New York State Commission for Mental Defectives indicated that the heredity of nearly three-fifths (58.5 per cent) was good. One other indication resulting from these various studies, which must be stated very tentatively, but which is exceedingly hopeful if true, is that for the most part the higher grade morons and borderline defectives are of the non-hereditary type. Because there is yet so much to be learned about this whole matter, it is exceedingly unwise, most of all for the layman, to be at all dogmatic concerning the causes of feeble-mindedness.<sup>16</sup>

**The Menace of the Feeble-minded.**—Toward the feeble-minded there have been displayed most divergent attitudes, ranging from complete indifference to great alarm. Even today, large numbers of the American people seem to take no interest whatever in the problems presented by our mental defectives, while others go up and down the land, forecasting the downfall of our civilization if the rapid multiplication of the feeble-minded be not hastily checked. But not only is there a great variety in popular attitudes; scientific men as well have disagreed radically concerning the social significance of feeble-mindedness. Thus Terman has told us, "all feeble-minded are at least potential criminals,"<sup>17</sup> while Healy has informed us with equal assurance that he has found "the accepted dictum which holds that the feeble-minded person is a potential delinquent to be

<sup>15</sup> Davies, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-80.

<sup>16</sup> This whole matter is carefully discussed in Reuter, E. B., *Population Problems*, Chaps. XIV and XV.

<sup>17</sup> Terman, L. M., *The Measurement of Intelligence*, p. 11.



utterly untrue.”<sup>18</sup> Those who have given mental tests to various groups of delinquents report all the way from 10 to 50 per cent feeble-minded. However, a number of careful students remind us that the offenders who are caught and imprisoned are often the most stupid; that there is a natural process of selection whereby the inmates of a correctional institution will inevitably present a much higher proportion of mental deficiency than will the whole body of law breakers. But we may well be suspicious of these high percentages which are brought to us even from the study of institutional groups. Thus, Healy reports from his study of 1,000 young repeated offenders that he discovered 89 morons and 8 imbeciles. In other words, less than 10 per cent were feeble-minded.<sup>19</sup> Anderson, after extended experience as medical director of the municipal court in Boston stated that “not more than 10 per cent of offenders in general are feeble-minded, but this 10 per cent give almost as much trouble as all the rest together.”<sup>20</sup>

... feeble-mindedness alone, or constitutional instability alone, are not all-sufficient causes of delinquency. It is recognized that unfortunate influences of environment, home training, bad associations, and the many other causes of delinquency which might be enumerated, are operative upon the feeble-minded and the constitutionally unstable, just as they are operative upon the intellectually normal and the constitutionally stable individuals. Or the delinquency may be caused by the peculiarities of temperament or personality, over and above feeble-mindedness or instability. In other words, a feeble-minded person may be actively social or anti-social just as the non-feeble-minded person is so. And similarly the constitutionally unstable person may be actively social or anti-social in the same way as an intellectually normal person or a constitutionally stable person. In other words, a defect of personality, temperament, character, or morality may be more serious than feeble-mindedness in accounting for

<sup>18</sup> Healy, Wm., in *Proceed. Am. Ass'n for Study of Feeble-minded*, 1918: 180.

<sup>19</sup> Healy, Wm., *The Individual Delinquent*, p. 139.

<sup>20</sup> Anderson, V. V., in *Boston Med. and Surg. Jour.*, Mar. 22, 1917. Quoted by Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 83. This whole matter has been carefully discussed by Sutherland, E. H., *Criminology*, Chap. V.

the delinquency of the feeble-minded offender, and similarly for the constitutionally unstable.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly conflicting evidence might easily be presented with reference to the relation of feeble-mindedness to prostitution, illegitimacy, alcoholism, vagrancy, unemployment and poverty. We shall not review all these data here, but refer the reader back to the several chapters in which these various problems have been discussed. Here it should be sufficient simply to repeat the statement frequently made and apparently well supported that by no means all members of the "lower" classes are necessarily inferior mentally; that not all the unemployed, vagrants, unmarried mothers, prostitutes and alcoholics are mental defectives. On the other hand, it is equally false to assume that all of the feeble-minded get into difficulties of the type suggested.

. . . There has been too great a tendency to regard feeble-mindedness as a definite entity and to assume that all defectives are equally dangerous as to the probability of dependency, immorality, or criminality, or as to the possibility of the transmission of their defect to their progeny. As a matter of fact we know of many unmistakable defectives who in sheltered or even unsheltered homes lead beautiful, serene, moral, and useful lives, and we also know of cases of definite defect due to some environmental cause where there is not the slightest danger that the defect would be transmitted even if the person should become a parent.<sup>22</sup>

Indeed we might easily go farther and maintain that the performance of certain types of routine work in industry and agriculture might well be left to the feeble-minded. There are many monotonous tasks from which "normal" human beings might well be freed. If there be high grade mental defectives of sufficient emotional stability to perform them, we may have discovered a means of releasing more capable people from these menial duties and at the same time of providing a legitimate function for the defectives. This statement is not, however, to be regarded as an argument against efforts to reduce the number of

<sup>21</sup> Doll, E. A., in *Nat. Conf. Soc. Wk.*, 1921: 364.

<sup>22</sup> Fernald, Walter E., in 1916 *Annual Report of the Massachusetts School for Feeble-minded*, quoted by Davies, *op. cit.*, p. 78.



feeble-minded. It may be assumed that if the human race is clever enough to eliminate mental deficiency, it can readily invent mechanical devices to take the place of much routine work now done by hand.

Moreover, we must not forget the hazards of feeble-mindedness for family life, education, industry and government. Feeble-mindedness of the wage earner often means inadequate income, and in the housewife it is likely to cause poor homemaking, neglect of children and inattention to health. It may involve friction in the family or sex irregularities. There is always the possibility that the defect may be transmitted and, finally, there is the financial burden as well as the nervous strain involved in caring for a defective member of an otherwise normal household. In the educational system, mental deficiency affords the clue to numerous cases of retardation, truancy and various types of misconduct. It raises some very interesting and difficult questions concerning the whole matter of compulsory school attendance; and while imposing the financial burden of operating special classes and schools, it has led to a recognition of the importance of individual attention to all children, whether they be handicapped or not. In industry, feeble-mindedness is frequently associated with unskilled labor, irregular employment, industrial accidents, and labor unrest. It complicates the problem of establishing a minimum wage, it hinders the growth of trade unionism and imposes most serious difficulties in the way of labor's participation in management. Finally, the presence of a considerable number of feeble-minded persons in our midst raises a question as to what modifications this will necessitate in a democracy. Should the mental defective vote and hold office? If not, how shall we find out who is sufficiently limited in intelligence to justify us in denying him the franchise?

**Locating the Feeble-minded.**—Obviously before anything like an adequate program for the feeble-minded can be worked out we must discover with a measure of accuracy not only how many mental defectives there are, but just exactly who they are. This process of identification is actually

going on through the examination of backward school children, the careful study of children who come before juvenile courts and the examination of adults before the courts and in various public and semi-public institutions. Sometimes there is an attempt to correlate these various activities in what is called a mental hygiene survey, an effort to do in a wholesale way what the lesser programs are undertaking piecemeal. The state of Massachusetts has gone one step beyond the mental hygiene survey in its "continuing census" of the feeble-minded. Record is kept by the State Department of Mental Diseases of all school children three or more years retarded, unless their retardation be shown to be the result of causes other than mental deficiency. It keeps a record of the feeble-minded identified by examinations wherever they may be made. So far as it is able, the Department also seeks to keep in touch with those who are registered as feeble-minded in order to learn whether their needs are being met and whether they are getting along successfully in the social order, or are in need of special attention.

One part of the process of identifying the feeble-minded consists in the application of what are known as intelligence tests. These were first developed to serve such a purpose by two Frenchmen, M. Binet, a psychologist, and M. Simon, a physician. They sought to devise a set of tests for each age group which would represent tasks which the great majority of children of that age could successfully perform. The American investigators, following the initial work of Binet and Simon, have sought to standardize their tests by trying them on large numbers of unselected school children in the various age groups. These tests have been modified in various ways and supplemented, especially by what are known as performance tests (tests involving manual dexterity as contrasted with use of language). It is impossible in the space at our disposal to describe even one set of tests. Access may easily be had to them through various publications.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Examples of some of the best known and most widely used tests are those contained in the following books: Terman, L. M., *The*



These various tests may be regarded as analogous to the clinical thermometer in the hands of a physician. Just as the thermometer reveals the presence or absence of elevation or depression of the body temperature, without indicating the cause of the deviation, so these tests show the presence or absence of mental retardation or acceleration without indicating the cause. Such mental deviation may be due, for example, to physical handicaps, limited opportunity, unfortunate experiences or to variation in native ability. Hence there are limits to the prognostic value of the mental tests. They do not afford a clear indication as to the prospects of success or failure except for those on a very low level. However, the tests do substitute objective, quantitative facts for subjective, haphazard impressions; they distinguish that which cannot be known in the present state of knowledge from that which is known and measurable; through them definite progress is being made toward the development of scientific methods.

There is an assumption behind the use of these tests by many persons that while the mental age continues to change until perhaps 16, the intelligence quotient is a fixed ratio. There is, however, abundant evidence to prove that in many cases the intelligence quotient varies and that occasionally it varies as much as 30 points.<sup>24</sup> By the more careful examiners it has been found that the intelligence test needs to be supplemented by: (1) physical examination, (2) personality analysis, (3) personal history, (4) family history, (5) observation under varying conditions, and (6) a repetition of the test itself at a later date. The physical examination frequently reveals the fact that failure in the intelligence test is due to general weakness or specific sensory defect. The personality study is intended to discover the patient's emotional stability, temperament, disposition,

*Measurement of Intelligence*; Yerkes, R. M., Bridges, James W., and Hardwick, Rose S., *A Point Scale for Measuring Mental Ability*; Healy, Wm., *The Individual Delinquent*, Chaps. V, VI, VII, IX.

<sup>24</sup> Theis, Sophie, and Goodrich, Constance, *The Child in the Foster Home*, pp. 28, 72-73, 129, 134, 137; Woolley, Helen T., and Ferris, Elizabeth, *Diagnosis and Treatment of Young School Failures*, p. 113; Judge Baker Foundation, *Case Studies*, Series I, Cases 14, 15.

aptitude, sociability, etc. In the study of his personal history the examiner may find that a poor showing in the formal test is due to lack of instruction or other limitation upon his range of experience. The family history indicates not only whether there are others of similar mental status in the kinship group, but by revealing family customs and attitudes may make it possible to interpret the specific behavior of the individual who is being studied. Observation of the patient under varying conditions is quite essential as a check upon the accuracy of the findings in the formal examination and may yield information otherwise not obtainable. Finally, it is always desirable to test the patient again after a lapse of time, and especially after important changes in his physical condition or his social environment. If the results are substantially the same as before, there is good reason to believe that the findings are fairly conclusive. If, however, there is a marked improvement or deterioration, there is a challenge to delve more deeply into the experience and surroundings of the patient.

**Care and Training of Mental Defectives.**—In the first half of the nineteenth century there was considerable optimism as to the possibility of education and even cure of the feeble-minded. A number of schools were established and great things were hoped for them. However, in spite of some genuine improvement in physical condition, in behavior, mental life and occupational ability, there seemed to be very definite limits beyond which it was impossible to go. We have no evidence that any cure of a feeble-minded person was ever effected. Presently the parents and guardians of the boys and girls in these schools began to urge that they be retained in the institutions because of their inability to live successfully outside. There was also an increased demand for the admission of new cases of all ages and all types. As a result of this trend, optimism passed into pessimism and the dominant note of the second half of the nineteenth century was segregation and custodial care with little thought of education. Numerous institutions were established, into which some of the more



obvious mental defectives were gathered and in which they lived sometimes for many years. The limitations of this program were first of all a very high cost of constructing and maintaining institutions, second, the impossibility of ever providing institutional care for the large number of feeble-minded who were being discovered, and third, the social and economic waste of segregating thousands of feeble-minded persons capable of useful employment and other participation in social life.

Today, institutional treatment of the feeble-minded stands on a different basis. To begin with, it is not intended to provide for all mental defectives, but is limited more and more to those more difficult cases who by reason of gross defect, troublesome behavior or unfavorable home conditions, cannot well participate in the general community life. Within the institutions there are necessarily some for whom little can be done beyond providing physical, custodial care; but there is a larger number who, while seeming to need the experience of institutional life for some years, are capable of being prepared for outside life. For nearly a quarter of a century the Massachusetts State School for the Feeble-minded at Waverly has been selecting from its inmates those who seemed capable of such training and has been sending them out into homes and into industry under supervision. The results of this experiment have been analyzed with sufficient care to demonstrate quite conclusively that for many defectives the institution is needed, but only as a place where they can be tided over the difficult period of adolescence and trained in habits which will enable them to be economically useful and law-abiding members of the larger community.

In connection with the State School for Mental Defectives at Rome, New York, there has been developed during the last twenty years what is known as the colony plan for feeble-minded. There have been established on farms and in village and town homes forty groups of inmates from the parent institution who live relatively independent lives, yet under the jurisdiction and supervision of the State School. While these colonies have not been altogether self-support-

ing, they have through the earnings of the inmates contributed a large part of the cost of their maintenance. These feeble-minded folk are employed on farms, in factories and at domestic service. In placing them, no appeal is made to the charity of the prospective employer. He is asked to take the boy or girl on his or her own merits, with, of course, an understanding of the inevitable limitations in ability. By means of the colony plan, it has been found possible to increase the capacity of the institution at very little additional cost. Many of these colonies occupy rented quarters and are nearly self-supporting. The surroundings afford greater stimulation and satisfaction for these high grade feeble-minded folk who are not able to manage their own affairs in the outside world. For some of them a colony is a stepping stone to parole and to ultimate discharge, while others must continue to live there throughout their days. Finally, the colony plan is a means of restoring man-power which would otherwise be lost to society.

Since a large number of mental defectives can not be accommodated in institutions and since, moreover, many of them seem not to require such segregation, there have grown up in many cities special classes and schools administered by the department of education. Since their establishment it has been found that many subnormal children who fail in the ordinary schools may be trained in certain respects without separation from their homes and neighborhoods and are enabled thereby to fit more readily into industry and the larger society. In these special classes and schools, as in the state institutions, first attention is given to habits of personal cleanliness, training of the senses, manual training, physical education, etc. These are later followed by a limited amount of academic work and as much vocational training as it seems possible to give. The ultimate success of these special classes and schools depends very greatly upon the follow-up work or after care, which is all too frequently neglected. It is necessary that there be field workers who can assist these boys and girls when they leave school, to adjust themselves



to community life, to find suitable positions, to choose suitable companions and recreational activities and to straighten out domestic difficulties.

One might summarize this program for the care and training of mental defectives by saying that it involves segregation of a relatively small number of low grade or otherwise difficult cases, the training and guidance of a larger number, making places in the social system for them and getting them into these places. It means helping the defectives to secure a job and a place to live, the recognition due one who does any piece of work well, the affection of an inner circle of those with whom they may have intimate contact, and as much novelty and variety as their natures may crave. This is nothing more than a program for the well-rounded satisfaction of the ordinary wishes of human beings, based on the limitations, intellectual and other, of these particular folk. At the same time that we are thus providing for the feeble-minded, we are also looking out for the interests of the larger society. In the long run what is good for the feeble-minded is probably not at variance with the best interests of the social order.

**Prevention of Mental Deficiency.**—Most programs of prevention have been advanced by the eugenists on the assumption that the overwhelming majority of cases are directly hereditary. They have urged segregation for life or at least during the reproductive period, sterilization, restrictive marriage laws and education both of the general public and of prospective married couples concerning the principles of eugenics. We have already seen the limitations of segregation. It remains to discuss briefly the other theories. Some fifteen states have passed sterilization laws, but little use has been made of them in most cases and at the present time there is hardly an opportunity to see sterilization in operation outside of California and Nebraska. Among the reasons which have limited the use of this measure are, first of all, popular disapproval based on supposedly humanitarian grounds. Certain religious bodies have opposed sterilization along with all forms of birth control. Even the medical profession is not in agree-

ment as to the physiological effects of the operation, although we have seen no published evidence that sterilization injures the patient's physical or mental health. Another ground of popular doubt has been the fear that with immunity from pregnancy there would be a rapid spread of sex vice and venereal disease. A much sounder reason for hesitating to impose sterilization upon any large number lies in the doubt as to diagnosis and prognosis, the difficulty of drawing a line between those whose offspring are very likely to be defective and those whose parenthood involves no menace to society. Over against this, however, may be urged the fact that even though certain feeble-minded persons may not transmit their own defect to their offspring they are very unlikely to be able to meet the requirements of parenthood in the way of physical care and social training for their children. There is little doubt that this incompetence of parents is the clue to much of the delinquency, poverty and other pathological conditions manifested by the notorious families whose members are all supposed to be feeble-minded.

Restrictive marriage laws which enter into the program of most eugenists may have a general social value, but it seems unlikely that they would make much difference to the mentally irresponsible, many of whose matings are outside of wedlock anyway. As to eugenic education, it has been shown to be possible to make a high grade defective understand that he should not marry or have children, but in general it seems rather hazardous to expect much from this part of the program so far as the feeble-minded themselves are concerned. On the other hand, it may serve as a valuable warning to the rest of the community and be the means of averting many a tragedy.

Consideration of the causes of feeble-mindedness suggests that by segregation or sterilization of members of markedly defective strains a real advantage may be gained. But since it appears that half of our feeble-minded did not inherit their defects, the preventive program must also include those measures which may help to eliminate tuberculosis, alcoholism, syphilis, infantile paralysis, etc. It cannot



neglect those measures which contribute to the general health of the expectant mother, provide adequate care during confinement and safeguard the growing child. That is to say, some of the most promising methods of preventing feeble-mindedness are precisely those measures which are vital to any public health program and are important quite aside from their possible relation to feeble-mindedness. It seems quite possible to reduce the proportion of seriously defective minds. It has been demonstrated that we can make a place in society for many of the feeble-minded whom we formerly thought it impossible to reclaim. The social burden of feeble-mindedness can quite certainly be diminished, but we have as yet no sure method of guaranteeing that the next generation will have no mental defectives in its midst.

#### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Describe as accurately and objectively as you can any person in your home district who appears to be feeble-minded. Make your statement largely in terms of what he does. Are there other apparently defective members of his family?
2. Secure data from the department of education, board of health, mental hygiene clinics and various social agencies of your home district which may serve as indices of the probable number of feeble-minded in the whole population.
3. Study the laws of your state which deal with mental defectives. Read the reports of the state department and state institutions which are responsible for their care and training.
4. Visit a state institution for the feeble-minded and write a report as indicated in previous chapters.
5. Visit and report on a special school or class for subnormal or mentally defective children.
6. Arrange to witness a demonstration of intelligence testing.

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## CHAPTER XXVII

### ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG ADDICTION

In the chapters that have gone before we have several times encountered alcoholism as one element in a situation that was dealt with primarily with reference to some other factor. Kenneth McGregor's father, now gone from the domestic circle, drank heavily and abused his wife and children with utter brutality. Even while he remained at home he contributed little to the family's support. Mr. Walters, now in a tuberculosis sanatorium, was also a heavy drinker, but one who neglected rather than abused his family. He was quite willing to shift responsibilities to his wife's shoulders. What was the relation of his alcoholism to his tuberculosis we do not know, but it could scarcely have failed to aggravate the disease. In the Downing family it was the mother who was alcoholic, and to a degree that made necessary a court order depriving her of the custody of her children. Andrew Mead seems not to have become a drinking man until he became thoroughly discouraged about his disabled condition and began to show signs of serious mental disturbance. Mr. Lee, on the other hand, was probably quite a "normal" person, who engaged in social drinking as one of the customs of his group; and even though he had to depend on outside assistance in his old age, we have no direct evidence that this was due to his earlier drinking habits. The Calkins brothers present still another situation. For them alcoholism was associated on the one side with feeble-mindedness and on the other with the crime of murder. It seems plain that, had they not been drinking cheap liquor on empty stomachs, they would not have committed this brutal crime. But, if they had not been feeble-minded, it is unlikely that their drinking

would have taken the form it did and have led to such serious consequences. Thus we have found alcoholism involved in a variety of situations. However, in almost none of these instances do we have an adequate account of the origin of the drinking. Neither is it possible for us to designate specific conditions as the direct and unqualified results of alcoholism. About all that we are justified in saying is that this is found in varying combinations of many different factors.

#### MR. ROBERTS—A REFORMED DRUNKARD

*Mr. Roberts*, now 71 years old, was crippled two years ago in a street accident. His hip was badly injured and he gets around only with difficulty, using a crutch. He was born in a middle western state and lived a number of years while a boy in Chicago. His parents were Methodists who sent him regularly to Sunday School and church. His father, an artist, was devoted to his twelve children. But both parents died when Mr. Roberts was about ten years old, after which he went to live with a farmer sixty miles out of the city. This farmer was a close-fisted Presbyterian who worked the boy very hard and gave him no schooling. After about two years at this place he moved on and at the age of fourteen became a cabin boy on one of the Lake boats. From this he worked up to the position of steward. Later he got a job in a Chicago supply house, the proprietor of which was a friend of his father's. He did well up to the age of twenty-one.

He was engaged to be married, had a house picked out and other plans made for the establishment of his home; but about this time he got to going with a crowd of fellows who drank a good deal and who made fun of his plans to get married. "Wouldn't you look fine as a daddy!" they would say to him. Their influence led him to break his engagement and then to give up his job. He drifted about, working in factories and drinking a great deal. He was the happy kind of drunkard, rarely got into a fight and was arrested only once. One fight was with a man who



ridiculed him because he kept on drinking after he was drunk; whereupon Mr. Roberts hit him upon the face with a bottle.

About 1917 or 1918 Mr. Roberts quit drinking. He says the way it came about was this. He had deposited \$100 with a saloon keeper to be used for liquor as he asked for it. Not knowing his money was gone—and maybe it wasn't—he went in and asked for a drink which was refused. The bartender said, "Your money is gone, the street for you." Mr. Roberts says, "That went through me like a shot and I haven't taken a drink since." After this the old man settled down, went to work and saved money. Since his injury he has been living in a private institution for homeless men, paying his way out of his savings. He is too proud to write to his relatives from whom he has had no word since 1900. He says, "They think I am dead; what good will it do them to know that I am alive?" He is quite cheerful about his condition and prospects. He says he might be much worse off. He might have been hurt more badly, he might be blind. There are lots of people in a worse fix than he is. He believes that he will again be able to work and support himself. He says, "The first and last parts of my life I can't help, but I am to blame for the middle of my life."

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**The Problem of Alcoholism Stated.**—It should be made clear at the outset that we are primarily concerned here with the habitually excessive users of alcohol. Only incidentally shall we consider the moderate drinkers and those who yield occasionally to excess. We are quite willing to admit that it is not easy to know just where the line should be drawn to separate moderate from heavy drinkers—evidently it will vary with age, health, mental ability and habits of working and living in general—but we need not be hindered thereby from dealing with the problems which are bound up with alcoholism.

. . . Chronic alcoholism has been a distressing personal and social symptom. The treatment has been prohibition. The ques-

tion of why the individual reached out for this chemical stimulant has been a matter of secondary interest. Was it a morbid craving, a manifestation of original sin; or was it a habit casually acquired, but difficult to break; or was it one way of getting cheaply a sort of satisfaction that none of the ordinary opportunities of life offered him? Did the alcohol dull vague feelings of depression and discontent, and perhaps in addition supply a glorious feeling of satisfaction and raise him into a different world from the humdrum atmosphere of the factory and the depressing atmosphere of the crowded home, with the careworn housewife and the noisy children? The alcohol satisfied some cravings apparently, only temporarily, it is true, and in the long run at a great price, the price of deterioration of character; but the cravings of the individual, the longings for some sort of exhilaration and freedom from care, were perhaps fundamental human traits that found little means of honest satisfaction in other directions. Did the chronic alcoholic live in a community that offered him decent opportunities for satisfaction along healthy lines, and had he been trained during his developing years to be able to utilize these sources of satisfaction? If the community offered few worthy opportunities for pleasure and recreation, then the chronic alcoholism could be looked upon as symptomatic of a faulty community organization. It is, of course, comforting for the community to be able to lay the blame on the alcoholic, and to be blind to the fact that we are partly responsible for the organization of the community. But it is surely not enough to punish the alcoholic or segregate him or banish his liquor; the fundamental problem is not dealt with until we know the condition of which the alcoholism is merely a symptom. . . .<sup>1</sup>

**Why Men Drink to Excess.**—The passage just quoted from Dr. Campbell suggests some of the causes which may underlie the habitually excessive use of alcohol. But before pushing this inquiry further, it may be profitable to see if we can discover why people drink at all, in order to differentiate more clearly between the “moderate drinker” and the “drunkard.” The use of alcoholic beverages probably begins for most people with the more or less accidental discovery of the keen, temporary pleasures associated therewith. They enjoy not only the taste and other physical sensations, but frequently genial comradeship as well. But however drinking may have started, either in a nation or

<sup>1</sup> Campbell, C. McFie, in *Men. Hyg.*, 5: 472.



in an individual, it is usually perpetuated as a social custom.

In many countries alcoholic drinks are regularly served at meals and indulged at other times by the whole population. Under such circumstances the abnormal person might well be the one who refused to participate. Now when citizens of such a country migrate to a land in which the use of alcoholic beverages is frowned upon, they doubtless seem to the native-born quite depraved. Yet they can no more be expected suddenly to give up century-old customs, like the drinking of wine, than they can suddenly discard their mother-tongue. Another explanation may be offered in terms of ignorance. Alcohol is supposed by many to possess beneficial qualities with which it is not endowed. Many men engaged in heavy manual labor imagine that they can better perform their tasks if they have frequent draughts of beer or whisky. In a prohibition country many of the so-called "upper classes" consider it "smart" to defy the law and drink liquors whose chemical analysis would certainly startle them.

A third statement of the case may be made in terms of compensation for failure to derive satisfaction from one's work and the ordinary routine of life. Probably for the vast majority of people in every land work is drudgery. It is monotonous and frequently the man is servant of the machine. Such employment does not yield large incomes, hence homes are poorly furnished, crowded and incapable of supplying an escape from the drab existence of a factory worker. What is more natural than that some substitute be sought? And what more enticing means of escape from reality than alcohol is available to the masses of men? "But unfortunately this release is purchased by impairing those very faculties that are needed to attain success, and, to make matters worse, anti-social tendencies are liberated at the same time, and these increase the maladaptation. The alcoholic drinks to forget and thereby increases that which he would forget. This is the vicious circle."<sup>2</sup>

However, it is well known that in those countries whose

<sup>2</sup> Starling, E. H., *The Action of Alcohol on Man*, p. 164.

people use alcohol quite universally, as well as in those where there is prohibition, the habitually excessive drinkers are a minority. To account for them leads us to the heart of our problem. Dr. Healy, who is in no wise an extremist, has said that "anyone who has even half studied human inebriety must have reached the conclusion that many alcoholics are defective or insane."<sup>3</sup> In support of this we have evidence from Dr. Anderson's studies in the Municipal Court in Boston.<sup>4</sup> He found that of 100 habitual and periodic drinkers who had been repeatedly arrested, 37 seemed to be feeble-minded, 7 were "insane," 7 were epileptic and 32 showed evidence of an "innate psychopathic constitution." An English report has information concerning 3,000 inebriates.<sup>5</sup> Of these nearly one-half (49 per cent) were considered "defective," one-eighth (12.4 per cent) "very defective" and a small number (2 per cent) "insane." The authors state that in their opinion "there exists a correlation of something like .70 to .80 between mental defect and alcoholism in this country. Of these two characteristics which is antecedent and which is consequent?"<sup>6</sup>

Perhaps this question can be answered as it stands, but we are inclined to consider both the mental deficiency and the alcoholism as elements in a situation which also involves such other factors as absence of supervision for the feeble-minded, ease of securing liquor and the custom of social drinking. It appears that alcoholism is often the resort of a person almost able to "keep up," but just defective enough to keep falling behind. Immediately his indulgence makes him seem to be as good as the best of his associates, but later he is more handicapped than ever.

Leaving out of the account feeble-mindedness as such, there are several ways in which alcoholism and nervous instability may be related. First, the native restlessness may lead to drinking as a means of securing that vaguely

<sup>3</sup> Healy, Wm., in *A Mental Health Primer*, p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, V. V., in *Jour. Crim. Law*, 7:89-95.

<sup>5</sup> Barrington, A., Pearson, K., and Heron, D., *A Preliminary Study of Extreme Alcoholism in Adults*, p. 8.

<sup>6</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 18.



defined something-or-other which may relieve this inner pressure. Second, it may be that without deliberately seeking the alcohol, the neurotic may easily be induced by others to partake. Third, having partaken, he will probably display more promptly and more obviously disturbing effects of the liquor. The alcohol will be apt to emphasize the existing weakness, and leave the neurotic in a much worse condition than he was before. Under these circumstances, the final condition of the patient may be ascribed *both* to his heredity and to his alcoholism.

**Deterioration of the Alcoholic.**—The problem of what results are produced in the individual by the moderate use of alcohol we shall not enter upon here, partly because this is a problem for physiology rather than for sociology and partly because the evidence to which we have access is conflicting.<sup>7</sup> Certainly in such countries as France and Italy, where the drinking of wine is an established custom, it would be difficult to show that moderate use of alcohol is a direct cause of pathological social conditions. But when we consider the habitual and the excessive drinkers we discover at once marked results in mental and physical health, and in social relations. The effects of acute alcoholic poisoning we have all observed, superficially at least, in cases of periodic drinkers when intoxicated. In addition to these conditions, the chronic drinker manifests other disorders and is an easy victim of numerous diseases not immediately connected with his inebriety. His blood and tissues are never free from the action of alcohol and are not allowed an opportunity for self-repair as in the man who drinks but little or goes on an occasional spree. The chronic alcoholic often suffers a disordered digestion, muscular tremor and sleeplessness. He is usually an easy victim of pneumonia and tuberculosis. He frequently has high blood pressure, hardening of the arteries or cirrhosis of the liver. Even more serious is his personal demoralization.

<sup>7</sup> Contrast, *e.g.*, Starling, E. H., *The Action of Alcohol on Man*, with Fisk, E. L., *Alcohol: Its Relation to Human Efficiency and Longevity*.

Generally speaking the chronic alcoholic becomes indifferent to responsibilities, loses ambition, and his affection wanes. Thus he is content to see his home ruined, and his wife and children reduced to poverty and misery. He is either boastful and loquacious, or taciturn and ill-tempered. At one time he may be amiable and sociable, at another peevish and irritable, constantly grumbling and finding fault, if not actually rude and insulting. He may exhibit in his conversation wit and humour, but not infrequently the mental association is rather by rhyme and repetition of well-worn jokes, abusing epithets, and coarse, vulgar stories, but occasionally he exhibits keen repartee. He is warm-hearted and generous when, having regard to the poverty in his home, he should be careful with his money. Untruthfulness, loss of power of attention, and a tendency to invent fictitious stories are common symptoms of mental deterioration in the chronic alcoholic. But although he may be at any time a danger to society, he generally manages to escape the lunatic asylum.

. . . All the evidence, however, indisputably tends to show that persons with an inborn neuropathic or psychopathic tendency, therefore having a narrow physiological margin of self-control, either due to an inborn deficiency of the highest evolutionary level of the brain, or a functional instability of it, become anti-social by quantities of alcohol which would have no effect on the normal individual.<sup>8</sup>

This leaves us about where we were in our discussion of the causation of inebriety, when we observed that alcoholism and mental abnormality are frequently part of the same personal situation, but it is very difficult, if not quite impossible, to say to what extent one is cause and the other effect.

The alcoholic's expectation of life is generally recognized to be considerably less than that of both moderate drinkers and total abstainers. There is, however, some dispute as to the effects of moderate and occasional drinking on the probable duration of life. Prof. Pearl<sup>9</sup> has recently aroused a lively discussion by his conclusion "that there is no indication in either sex that the moderate and occasional consumption of alcoholic beverages adversely affects duration of life." Most life insurance companies, however, act on

<sup>8</sup> Mott, Sir F. W., *Alcohol and its Relations to Problems in Mental Disorders*, Appendix to Starling, pp. 188, 211-212.

<sup>9</sup> Pearl, Raymond, *Alcohol and Mortality*, Appendix to Starling, *op. cit.*



the assumption that any use of alcoholic liquors tends to shorten life, and, as a matter of fact, the bulk of the evidence appears to support this position.<sup>10</sup>

**Social Consequences of Alcoholism.**—Unfortunately the effects of habitually excessive use of alcohol do not stop with the drinker himself. His children are the most immediate sufferers. Whether, however, their troubles are due primarily to germinal impairment and foetal injury or to improper care during infancy and early childhood is not easy to tell. At least they do not inherit a direct alcoholic tendency, though they do frequently exhibit poor nutrition and poorly developed nervous systems.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, they are notoriously the victims of neglect and abuse. An instance of this we found in the record of the Downing family. But the children do not suffer as individuals; the whole fabric of family life is endangered by the excessive alcoholism of either parent.

. . . The S. family, for example, have dragged out a miserable life in which Saturdays and Sundays were a few degrees more to be dreaded than other days. The mother had broken down both physically and nervously; the oldest boy, weary of carrying almost the entire burden of the family support, was threatening to leave home; the two younger children were falling behind in school and were seriously affected nervously by their father's threats and abuse. Last June Mr. S. succeeded in getting a quantity of crude alcohol and made himself a potent beverage of some sort which proved even more demoralizing than his previous drink. Not until the New Year was the supply exhausted. But since that time he has had no liquor and his wife reports him as working steadily and supporting the family, kind to the children and herself and interested in his home.<sup>12</sup>

Chronic and heavy drinking is bound to affect the earning power of the one who thus indulges; hence it may be a factor in irregular employment and poverty. It may add

<sup>10</sup> Fisk, E. L., in *Nation*, 120: 36.

<sup>11</sup> Some of the conflicting data on this point may be found in: Elderton, Ethel M., *A First Study of the Influence of Parental Alcoholism on the Physique and Ability of the Offspring*; Kelynaek, T. N., *The Drink Problem of Today*; Starling, E. H., *The Action of Alcohol on Man*.

<sup>12</sup> Pear, W. H., in *Nat. Conf. Soc. Work*, 1920: 237-238.

to the social handicaps of the foreigner trying to get a start in America. It may lead in extreme cases to suicide. The relation of alcoholism to sex irregularities and to venereal infection is not easily determined. That they are frequently associated we well know, but whether alcoholism leads to sexual excesses or whether it follows them is hard to tell. Likewise the evidence concerning the correlation of alcoholism and crime is rather confusing. Some figures<sup>13</sup> indicate that the proportion of known offenses varies directly with the consumption of alcohol, but we have found no proof that there is a causal relation between the two. In particular cases, like that of the Calkins brothers, the connection is easy to see; in others it is quite obscure. About all we can say is that the reduction in the number of arrests in many American cities since the adoption of prohibition strongly suggests that there is a causal relation between the use of alcoholic beverages and the committing of certain offenses.

**Results of Prohibition in America.**—Since the United States is committed by constitutional amendment to prohibition of the manufacture and sale of alcoholic drinks, we shall not discuss the various programs for regulating the liquor traffic in this and other countries.<sup>14</sup> Instead, we shall examine some of the evidence which may help us to evaluate the results of prohibition. Broadly speaking, beer has been suppressed. It is too bulky to be made and sold in defiance of the law. Wine, too, may be omitted from the larger calculation. It has been in the main a beverage of the well-to-do and with increased prices is more than ever a luxury. But spirituous liquors are both made and imported in violation of the law. Even these, however, seem to be available in gradually decreasing quantities.<sup>15</sup> What then has happened since the supply of alcoholic beverages has been curtailed? "The enemies of prohibition do not

<sup>13</sup> Kelynack, *op. cit.*, p. 162.

<sup>14</sup> For description of some of these plans see: Koren, John, *Alcohol and Society*; Shadwell, Arthur, *Drink in 1914-1922, A Lesson in Control*; Webb, Sidney and Beatrice, *The History of Liquor Licensing in England*.

<sup>15</sup> Wilson, P. W., in *Americana Annual*, 1923: 687.



hesitate to blame the Eighteenth Amendment for all the ills that have affected society since the fatal year of 1920, while the friends of prohibition are not at all backward in crediting the amendment with all the social gains made since it went into effect. The seeker after truth finds it difficult to determine where opinion ends and fact begins."<sup>16</sup> However there are some crude data available for our inquiry.

First of all, there has been a decrease in the number of inebriates cared for by public and semi-public agencies. In New York City the number of alcoholics discharged from various hospitals dropped from 9,600 in 1914 to 3,300 in 1920. In 1922, however, the number rose again to 6,400. The proportion of these cases to the total population fell from 0.18 per cent in 1914 to 0.06 per cent in 1920, rising in 1922 to 0.11 per cent.<sup>17</sup> In Massachusetts the former State Inebriate Hospital has been turned over to the care of disabled soldiers and 9 out of 11 private hospitals for alcoholics have been closed.<sup>18</sup>

Second, there has been a decrease in the number and proportion of deaths from alcoholism. Data from 19 large cities with a combined population of 20,000,000 showed the following interesting changes.

DEATHS FROM ALCOHOLISM IN 19 AMERICAN CITIES<sup>19</sup>

Year	Deaths
1916	1,954
1917	1,817
1918	820
1919	358
1920	321
1921	503
1922	828
1923	1,261

Similar data from the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company show a reduced death rate so far as alcoholism is concerned.

<sup>16</sup> Pollock, H. M., and Furbush, E. M., in *Men. Hyg.*, 8: 548.

<sup>17</sup> *Survey*, 52: 112-113.

<sup>18</sup> Sen. Jones in *Cong. Rec.*, Aug. 23, 1922.

<sup>19</sup> Stoddard, Cora F., in *Survey*, 52: 353.

## ALCOHOLISM DEATH-RATES PER 100,000 POLICY-HOLDERS

*Metropolitan Life Insurance Company*<sup>20</sup>

Year	Rate	Year	Rate
1912 .....	5.3	1918 .....	1.8
1913 .....	5.2	1919 .....	1.4
1914 .....	4.7	1920 .....	0.6
1915 .....	4.1	1921 .....	0.9
1916 .....	5.1	1922 .....	2.1
1917 .....	4.9	1923 .....	3.0

The reasons for the increased rate of deaths from alcoholism since 1920 are not clear. Perhaps the quality of "bootleg" liquor available, now that old stocks are reduced, may have something to do with this.

Third, there has been a reduction in the cases of "alcoholic insanity." New cases of this type admitted to civil state hospitals of New York numbered above 500 nearly every year from 1909 to 1917. Then they began to decrease, dropping in 1920 to 122, but rising in 1922 to 226. At the same time there was a corresponding series of changes in ratio of alcoholics to all new patients and to the total population.<sup>21</sup> The percentage of alcoholic cases among all admissions to state hospitals in 19 states fell from 11 per cent in 1910 to 3.9 per cent in 1922. But over a shorter period of time the change is much less marked. The percentage of alcoholics among new admissions to state hospitals in 12 states fell from 4.7 in 1919 to 4.0 in 1922. The number of new cases of "alcoholic insanity" per 100,000 of the general population in the same states fell from 2.7 in 1919 to 2.2 in 1922.<sup>22</sup>

Fourth, there has been in some states a marked falling off in the number of persons arrested and imprisoned for various criminal offenses. It must be remembered, however, that neither arrests nor convictions is an accurate index of the number of crimes committed, since both depend so greatly on the changing policies of public officials.

<sup>20</sup> Survey, 52: 354.

<sup>21</sup> Pollock, H. M., and Furbush, E. M., in Men. Hyg., 8: 551, 554.

<sup>22</sup> *Loc. cit.*, pp. 562, 564.



ARRESTS FOR DRUNKENNESS BEFORE AND AFTER PROHIBITION <sup>23</sup>

City	<i>Arrests in Year</i>		Years Compared	
	Before Prohibition	After Prohibition		
Boston .....	52,700	16,500	1919	1920
Cincinnati .....	1,500	300	1918	1920
Des Moines .....	4,400	1,900	1914	1921
Detroit .....	17,400	7,200	1916	1921
Louisville .....	3,600	400	1918-19	1919-20
Los Angeles ....	17,500	6,800	1916	1921
New York .....	22,600	8,200	1915	1921
Portland, Ore. ..	6,700	2,900	1915	1921
San Francisco ..	17,400	5,800	1919	1921

A study in Massachusetts compared the average number of arrests, commitments and prisoners for seven "wet" years (1912-18) with the average for two "dry" years (1920-21).<sup>24</sup> It showed that the arrests for drunkenness decreased 55 per cent and arrests for all causes decreased 24 per cent. Commitments to the Deer Island house of correction diminished 83 per cent and commitments to the state farm fell off 82 per cent. The total number of prisoners in all penal institutions was reduced 52 per cent. But over against these astonishing figures must be set the sobering fact that for the country as a whole no such decrease seems to have occurred. The total number of inmates of Federal, state, county and city prisons and road or chain gangs actually increased from 146,000 on July 1, 1917, to 164,000 on July 1, 1922.<sup>25</sup>

Finally, we have some data bearing on the relation of prohibition to poverty. In spite of the serious business depression and extended unemployment of 1920-22, the Massachusetts study already referred to showed a decrease in the number of persons receiving material relief in institutions and in their own homes. The number aided by the towns and cities fell off 18 per cent, those aided by the

<sup>23</sup> Adapted from Farnum, H. W., *Confessions of a Prohibitionist*, p. 21.

<sup>24</sup> Sen. Jones in Cong. Rec., Aug. 23, 1922.

<sup>25</sup> U. S. Census Bureau, *Number of Prisoners in Penal Institutions, 1922 and 1917*, p. 11.

state 9 per cent. This is truly a remarkable achievement, but it should not be credited entirely to prohibition for the improving technique of social case work is making it possible for many people to get back on their feet without having to accept material relief. Moreover, the "craze for economy" which has swept the country during the last few years may have been an important factor in bringing about these results.

Here we seem to have discovered a number of important gains since the advent of prohibition, but how far they are direct results we cannot yet determine. There is little doubt that prohibition has played an important rôle in these changes. But over against them must be placed the apparently growing attitude of defiance of the law not only on the part of the "lower classes" but of our "best citizens." How general this is no one can tell, but all will agree that it is a serious matter. Along with it goes the laxity and the grafting of many officials charged with the enforcement of the law. These popular attitudes and manifestations of corruption in government might easily prove to be more serious than the open saloon. What the final result will be time alone can tell. In the meantime there is a presumption in favor of prohibition.

#### MR. THOMPSON—ADDICTED TO MORPHINE <sup>26</sup>

*Mr. Thompson* was born in a northern state nearly seventy years ago. He had a fair education and in his earlier years was a moderately successful business man. A druggist who had known him for thirty years said that he was once "worth" between \$30,000 and \$40,000, was proprietor of a hotel in a large city and later was part owner of a system of lunch wagons. A number of years ago *Mr. Thompson* had Bright's disease and was in bed two years. He had to give up his business, and since then had done odd jobs for the Western Union Telegraph Company and worked as a janitor.

It was during this illness, according to *Mr. Thompson*,

<sup>26</sup> Summary of a record in the files of a Family Welfare Society.



that he began to use morphine, but the physician who wrote his prescriptions said he had been a drug addict for twelve years and the druggist reported giving him morphine long before that. This doctor described Mr. Thompson as a most pitiable piece of humanity entirely dependent upon morphine to keep him alive; said that he had given him "the cure" three times, but that after each of the "cures" the man had been so near death that it had been necessary again to resort to the drug. The prescription at this time was thirty grains three times a week. The physician said that when the Harrison Drug Act went into effect he took Mr. Thompson before the Board of Health, explained his case and was given permission to give him the weekly allowance. When the matter was presented to the Chief Inspector of the Federal Narcotic Board Mr. Thompson became a "registered addict." Another physician who was called in to care for Mrs. Thompson was quite incensed at the man's ability to procure the drug, and felt that if he would not go willingly to a hospital for treatment he should be committed through the courts.

Naturally, Mr. Thompson's physical condition was not good. He looked very frail and white. He had little appetite and, when he worked, came home utterly tired out. Personally, he was uncommunicative and "hard to get at." He seemed to have no intimate friends, although a number of people were interested in helping him.

*Mrs. Thompson* was born on a farm in a western state fifty-five years ago. She early hired out as a domestic and at the age of 19 went to a large city where she met and married George Hilton. They did not get on well and were divorced some twenty years ago. Immediately thereafter she married Mr. Thompson with whom she had lived continuously and happily ever since. They have had no children. Like her husband, Mrs. Thompson was pretty certainly a drug addict, although only one of three physicians was willing to state this definitely. She was also said to use tobacco—whether chewing or smoking was not stated.

She was not only younger but also much more active than her husband. Yet she was constantly having some ailment

or other. She was always making excuses—she was “not able to dress and go to the clinic in hot weather, but would go as soon as the weather was cooler,” her “back hurt her so terribly” she could not dress, etc. On the occasion of one visit she was lying down with a paper-backed novel. Sometimes her house was neat and clean; at other times it was dirty and disorderly. Mrs. Thompson was a member of a Protestant church and evidently used this connection to good (financial) advantage.

*Relatives.*—Mr. Thompson claimed that all his near relatives were dead. But living nearby were the mother, two brothers and two sisters of Mrs. Thompson. The mother was seventy-two years old, and had as her only income a pension of \$12 a month paid because of the father’s service in the Civil War.

One of Mrs. Thompson’s sisters was, like her, “a great hand to complain” of various ills. When visited one day she said she was suffering from a “terrible nervous headache.” She had a bright bed-room in a good part of the city, but it was stuffy and untidy. The dresser held numerous bottles of medicine, a two-pound box of chocolates partly demolished and eight or ten paper-backed novels. Her hair was “frowsy” and her dress soiled and wrinkled—she had been lying in bed with all her clothes on. Her mouth and face were stained with chocolate; her eyes had a vacant stare. Her husband was order clerk in a cracker factory. He had formerly been in the employ of Mr. Thompson and was now helping him in various ways.

One brother was “separated” from his wife, had turned his child over to the sister just described, and left for “parts unknown.”

The younger brother was married for the second time. He was divorced from his first wife, who had also remarried. She had taken their child, but Mr. Peters (Mrs. Thompson’s brother) was helping to pay for his schooling. The present Mrs. Peters was obviously not on good terms with her “in-laws,” for although living within a block she never entered their homes. Mr. Peters was aiding his mother and did not feel able to help the Thompsons.



The other sister is unknown to us except by name.

*Difficulties Summarized.*—Drug addiction is clearly the central problem in this family, but the information about Mrs. Thompson's relatives is not very reassuring as to innate capacities or acquired standards. Whether Mrs. Thompson learned the use of morphine from her husband and he acquired the habit during some illness we will probably never know. But he at least (and very likely she, too), was a confirmed and apparently hopeless addict. When they applied for relief from a Family Welfare Society nearly ten years ago, Mr. Thompson was physically unable to work and Mrs. Thompson could not find any to do. They had been moving about a great deal, owed money for rent and gas and seemed unable to plan their affairs.

*Treatment.*—During the past ten years considerable material relief has been given in the form of groceries, rent, fuel, clothing, furniture, etc. Part of this came from the Family Welfare Society, part from the church and part from the relatives. Arrangements were made for both Mr. and Mrs. Thompson to take "the cure" for morphine at the City Hospital, but nothing seems to have been accomplished thereby. Much time and energy were expended in the effort to get Mrs. Thompson to a dental clinic. She finally went, but only after exhausting a long repertoire of excuses and promises. Advice was given concerning living quarters and the social workers helped to find suitable places in which to live. It seemed useless to attempt to break the drug habit, so the program of the Family Welfare Society was of necessity limited for the most part to making the Thompsons as comfortable as possible.

There really does not seem to be much hope for this family. Mr. Thompson cannot live a great while and his wife shows no signs of improvement. Perhaps they should be institutionalized. But where? In the state where the Thompsons live they might go to a State Hospital for Mental Diseases or to a local prison. The hospitals are crowded and do not want drug addicts. The jails can hold them only for a short time and are not in a position to give appropriate care and treatment.

**Narcotic Drug Addiction.**—From all that we have been able to learn, the story of Mr. Thompson is quite typical of the experiences of persons addicted to the use of morphine. He probably acquired the physical need for the drug during a serious illness; this condition became chronic through continued use; attempted “cures” left the patient in a physical condition which necessitated further resort to the morphine. At first view the drug addict seems to be a weak-willed person, viciously indulging a depraved appetite, untrustworthy, uncooperative, unworthy of help, incurable and hopeless. Sometimes he is apparently all of these, but nothing is gained by calling him names. We will be helped in understanding him if we regard him as sick rather than criminal or vicious. Drug addicts, whether they use morphine, heroin, cocaine or some other narcotic, present physical conditions which demand medical attention and mental conditions which call for the services of a psychiatrist. They are sick both in body and in mind.

My present definition of narcotic drug addiction is as follows: a definite physical disease condition, presenting constant and definite physical symptoms and signs, progressing through clean-cut clinical stages of development, explainable by a mechanism of body protection against the action of narcotic toxins, accompanied if unskillfully managed by inhibition of function, autotoxicosis and autotoxemia, its victims displaying in some cases deterioration and psychoses which are not intrinsic to the disease, but are the result of toxemia, and toxicosis, malnutrition, anxiety, fear and suffering.<sup>27</sup>

The users of narcotic drugs include a wide variety of folks—the mentally strong and the feeble-minded, the idle rich and the outcast of the underworld. One addict may be honest, competent, truthful and intelligent; while another is dishonest, incompetent, untruthful and incapable of self-control. Color, nationality, social or economic position, age, mental and moral characteristics apparently have little to do with acquisition of addiction-disease. Anyone to whom cocaine or opiates are given for a sufficiently long time will become an addict. The direct cause is adminis-

<sup>27</sup> Bishop, E. S., *The Narcotic Drug Problem*, pp. 20-21.



tration of the drug itself. This, in turn, may come about in several different ways such as by a physician's prescription during illness, or use by a nurse without prescription. Certain patent medicines contain opium derivatives and tend to produce the physiological condition for which the drug itself affords the only immediate relief. A few people perhaps begin the use of cocaine or morphine as a "lark" in a spirit of bravado or of curiosity. Others employ it quite deliberately to help them over some emergency. An instance of this is the physician who is called to the scene of an accident when he is himself thoroughly fatigued.

The number of drug addicts in the United States has been variously estimated at numbers ranging from 100,000 to 4,000,000.<sup>28</sup> Because of the secrecy involved in illicit use of narcotic drugs—and it seems clear that this is the principal use—it is quite impossible to secure dependable figures. A special committee appointed by the Secretary of the Treasury reported in 1919 that the number of addicts in this country was probably in excess of 1,000,000.<sup>29</sup> But a report of the United States Public Health Service placed the estimate at not to exceed 150,000 with 110,000 probably nearer the real facts.<sup>30</sup>

A few people have used narcotic drugs in moderation over an extended period of years and without apparent interference with their professional, domestic and other social activities. These are exceptional persons who appreciate the nature of these drugs and their own physical condition. But it seems quite certain that even they would have lived more successfully and more happily without the drugs than with them. Indeed, there is a very serious menace to the respectable addict's peace of mind in that he is engaged in a practice which, if known, would cause him to lose the confidence and respect of other people. He is therefore in constant fear lest his condition be discovered.

For the great majority of addicts there are more obvious

<sup>28</sup> Fisk, E. L., *Alcohol: Its Relation to Human Efficiency and Longevity*, p. 143.

<sup>29</sup> Quoted in House Joint Resolution 453, 67th Congress.

<sup>30</sup> Survey, 52: 448.

and more serious consequences. With the realization of their dependence on the drug, the failure of so-called "cures," worry, the cynical attitude of other people, even of practicing physicians, and social ostracism, the victims lose confidence in themselves, become hopeless and discouraged. As the demoralization advances they may display personal disorderliness, disregard of time, neglect of business or decline of family affection. Cocaine addicts usually suffer digestive disturbances, lose their appetite and are unable to sleep soundly. They frequently experience delusions, known in the vernacular as "bull horrors." When these are present the addict imagines that he is being pursued or watched and may be afraid to venture out of the house for fear some dreadful calamity may befall him.

It has been frequently asserted that the use of morphine, cocaine or heroin is a direct cause of crime. This, however, has not been established. What appears to be more nearly the truth is that deprived of his drug, and lacking funds or legal means of procuring it, he is driven by genuine suffering to buy through illicit channels or to steal. If afterwards he takes morphine or cocaine before "doing a job" it is for precisely the same reason that another man would eat a good meal before undertaking a difficult task. The use of these drugs by prostitutes seems often to be intended to deaden any lingering sense of shame or to provide artificial stimulation in a life of sordid monotony.

**Control of Opium and Other Narcotics.**—The users of narcotic drugs have been subjected to nearly everything except scientific treatment. They have been cajoled, exhorted, and prayed over; they have been ostracised; they have been prosecuted as criminals; they have been induced to take various "cures." But with few exceptions these measures have brought only temporary relief and many times not even that. The heads of correctional institutions have boasted of the gain in weight and other signs of physical improvement shown by their "dope fiends," but have confessed their failure by admitting that these unfortunates come back again and again. A discussion of the medical treatment of drug addicts falls outside our prov-



ince, but it may be pointed out that some success has been achieved in dealing with these patients, and that this success involves not merely medication, but control of the social environment as well. Users of narcotics, like alcoholics, are often among the folks who have been described as "almosts." Finding themselves falling behind in the race of life, they are naturally tempted to avail themselves of anything which promises a prompt overcoming of the handicap. Their salvation lies not only in changing pathological conditions in their bodies—whenever this can be done—but their placement in a social situation wherein they can achieve a measure of success, recognition, and affection.

While treatment of the individual drug addicts has been found expensive and discouraging, there seems to be some hope of controlling the supply of the drugs in question and thereby limiting their use to medicinal and scientific purposes. The International Opium Commission meeting at Shanghai in 1909 and the Hague Opium Convention of 1912 led to treaties between the United States and several other nations, undertaking to regulate transportation and sale, but not to control production. In 1921 the Council of the League of Nations adopted a resolution urging restriction of production to amounts required for "strictly medicinal and scientific" purposes. But when the resolution was presented to the Assembly, representatives of opium producing countries succeeded in having the phrase changed to "legitimate," which is so vague as to be of little force. In the winter of 1924-25 two new conferences on the control of narcotic drugs were held in Geneva. The first dealt with opium smoking in the Orient; the second with all "habit-forming" drugs. An advisory committee drafted a plan which was the basis of discussion at this conference.

The proposal of the advisory committee assumes that the annual needs of each state for narcotic drugs can be stated within a reasonable margin and provides for a limitation of imports to each state to this figure. The project provides a central board to watch over the distribution and to keep the governments informed

as to one another's imports, so that exporting countries can carry out their agreement to stop shipments to countries whose reasonable requirements are met and to revise if need be the estimates of a country which clearly are too high, so as to make it probable that the opium imported is not going to be used for improper purposes.

To prevent the possibility of its being advantageous to stay out of the International Union, the control board is to be directed to fix the legitimate requirements of non-members, and member states agree to keep their shipments to non-members within the limit so fixed. Trade among member states is to be subject to the system of export and import licenses which has been devised by the Opium Commission, so that no one can trade internationally in narcotics without a license, both from the government of a country into which the drugs are to be brought and from the government of the country of export. Thus full publicity of the trade is assured by reports to the central body and the responsibility of the governments of importing and exporting countries is fixed.<sup>31</sup>

As these words are written no adequate account of these conferences is at hand. But such reports as have come through indicate that both were failures. Apparently Geneva beheld the interesting spectacle of the East—Japan, China, India (not the official British representative)—seeking to control the opium traffic and being blocked at every point by the West—Great Britain, France, Holland (leading colonial powers in the Far East). The United States was the only one of the great “civilized,” “Christian” nations whose representatives joined those from the Orient in an honest effort to bring the production and distribution of opium under control. The colonial powers seemed eager to make a show of reform without offending certain business interests or losing revenue derived from the sale of narcotics.

This is one more illustration of the fact that the solution of any social problem depends upon willingness to face that problem frankly and to utilize such knowledge as is available, no matter how completely it may overthrow existing prejudices and practices. The great discrepancy between the scientific knowledge and technical skill, which might be

<sup>31</sup> Survey, 53: 157.



applied to any social problem, and the platitudes, evasions and "log-rolling" with which we meet it does not reflect much credit on the twentieth century. Even the most ardent reformers are often unwilling to face the full implications of their proposals. Thus the Americans who glow with pride at their nation's stand at Geneva little realize that control of the opium traffic can be brought about only through invasion of the "sacred rights" of private business and "sovereign" powers—such invasion as these same Americans violently condemn in the Russians and in the League of Nations.

### PROJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Clip from newspapers for three months all news items, editorials and advertisements dealing with alcoholic drinks and narcotic drugs. Include material concerning "bootleggers," "cures," arrests and convictions, "graft."
2. Write the life history of a known alcoholic or drug addict. Pay special attention to the circumstances of beginning use of the liquor or drug; effects on health, economic success, family life and personality; treatment and its results.
3. From newspaper clippings, personal interviews, public addresses (clergymen, politicians, employers and labor leaders), conversation in public places (Pullman cars, hotel lobbies, barber shops, pool halls) and other sources secure data for a study of social attitudes toward the making, sale and drinking of alcoholic beverages.
4. Make a similar study of social attitudes with reference to the importing, smuggling, sale and use of narcotic drugs.
5. Examine state and Federal laws dealing with alcoholic beverages and narcotic drugs and those who make, sell or use them.
6. Visit an institution (jail, reformatory, penitentiary, hospital for insane, inebriate hospital or sanatorium) which cares for alcoholics. Report on:
  - a. Organization and administration
  - b. Personnel
  - c. Admission and dismissal policies and routine
  - d. Buildings and equipment
  - e. Methods of treatment
  - f. Data concerning patients
7. Visit and report similarly upon an institution caring for drug addicts.

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Part IV

CONCLUSION





## CHAPTER XXVIII

### OTHER ASPECTS OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION AND PERSONAL DEMORALIZATION

It must be apparent by this time that the scope of social pathology is much too great for adequate consideration in a single volume. Not only has it been impossible for us to undertake a comprehensive treatment of any single problem; we have been forced to omit many important phases entirely. What we have done is to select, more or less arbitrarily, a number of situations involving personal demoralization and social disorganization. We might with equal propriety have centered our attention upon the malfunctioning of social institutions, such as school, church, industry, and state. Indeed, we have by implication dealt with the failures of these institutions throughout our discussion of the other problems. This suggests that what appear at first sight to be distinct and unique social problems are but phases of a complex situation, which must be viewed from several angles if it is to be really understood.

We have taken as they appear on the surface, various human ills, such as widowhood, desertion, unemployment, child labor, sickness and feeble-mindedness. These we have assembled under three main heads: (1) family disorganization, (2) economic disorganization, (3) broken health. Some of the other major aspects of social pathology, which we have been unable to discuss, are: (4) educational disorganization, (5) political disorganization, (6) "misuse" of leisure time, (7) neighborhood and community disorganization, (8) migration, (9) race friction, (10) international conflict.<sup>1</sup> In this present chapter it is our pur-

<sup>1</sup> We have also been urged to include a chapter on housing. Its omission has been in part arbitrary, but in part for the reason that

pose to point out some of the specific problems involved in each.

**Educational Aspects.**—In the chapters that have gone before we have found defective education a prominent factor in the maladjustment of individual persons. In the case of Kenneth McGregor, retarded in school, a truant, liar and petty thief, “the boy’s condition is almost wholly traceable to the school’s ignorance of the nature of the educative process and of precautions to be observed in dealing with very common instances of a typical individual mental and nervous organization.”<sup>2</sup> So long as fortune smiled, Mr. Mead was able to provide well for his family; but when adversity came, the fact that he had not gone beyond the second grade and had no skilled trade constituted a serious handicap. Like the Meads in ignorance of business methods, but unlike them in having a rather good general education, were the Johnsons, who had been victimized by loan sharks and an unscrupulous grocer who said their account was “all a great mystery and he (Mr. Johnson) could not understand it.”

Mrs. Capodanno, a native of Italy, spoke no English at all and was illiterate in her own language. She was ignorant of nearly everything that is necessary to make a successful housewife. Mr. Capodanno spoke broken English and apparently had had little schooling in his own country. His lack of special skill and his general ignorance made him especially subject to industrial exploitation in the United States. John and Mary Haynes had an average American education, but were utterly unprepared for marriage. They seem to have had no appreciation of the give-and-take which is so essential a part of family life or of the responsibilities involved in parenthood.

Mr. White, who lost his sight in an industrial accident, had gone to school very little and had no skilled trade. Hence after his misfortune there was need not only for the available literature stresses economic and health problems, but sheds very little light on the relation of housing to personality, family life and social organization in general. We believe that this presents an important field for sociological research.

<sup>2</sup> Morrison, Henry C., in *Three Problem Children*, p. 123.



re-education, but for basic general and vocational training. Andrew, the crippled brother of Mr. Mead, was another who needed vocational re-education. Having completed the grade school, he had a better foundation on which to build, but he never received the training essential for self-support. Concerning Newton, Jamison and Mathews, we do not have sufficient information to indicate whether they were amenable to re-education or required merely custodial care.

Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller were so isolated by the loss of sight and hearing in infancy that they could not be reached by the usual educational processes. But in happy contrast to the cases just cited, they did receive individual attention and education adapted to their specific needs. The crippled Jaroslav children likewise required modifications of the ordinary school routine. The educational neglect of the Calkins brothers is a fair sample of the usual experience of the feeble-minded. Moreover, while their abilities were obviously limited, both apparently had the capacity to acquire a simple trade and provide for themselves, at least under supervision.

The maladjustments which we have just cited indicate a need for modification and expansion of the educational system in a number of directions. Perhaps the most striking feature of all is the lack of individualization and evidence of its possibilities. Attention to the specific needs of each pupil would not only help to overcome most of these difficulties but—what is more important—would tend to prevent many of them from appearing at all. In practice this would mean the detailed study of each separate child, and the provision of a sufficiently elaborate and flexible school program to enable principals and teachers to act upon the information secured.

Such a program would seem to involve the modification and extension of existing facilities rather than to necessitate the introduction of entirely new machinery. It would include: (1) the further development of vocational guidance and training; (2) specific preparation for family life—including sex hygiene, budget-making, dietetics, clothing,

home decoration and child care; (3) what may be called avocational education or "culture," the development of personal resourcefulness and breadth of interests; (4) cultivation of a scientific attitude toward personal affairs—elimination of prejudice, development of open-mindedness, frank recognition of difficulties, willingness to face them squarely and to make use of professional service; (5) provision of special education for handicapped persons; (6) re-education for the physically and mentally disabled.

So far we have been dealing with education in the sense of formal schooling; but there is another aspect of education which is important in meeting the problems of social maladjustment. This is that broader and less direct education which is a necessary basis for a sound public opinion; and enlightened public opinion, as we have repeatedly found, is essential not only to the development of effective agencies for treatment, but especially for the prevention of unwholesome conditions. This broader education will include: (1) research, getting the facts; (2) publicity, presenting the facts; (3) discussion, joint consideration of the facts; (4) social action in the light of the facts, (*a*) popular support of existing agencies that are effective, (*b*) legislation that is needed to provide better machinery for dealing with maladjustments and to prevent their occurrence.

We may illustrate this by the problem of child labor. There is need of further research to determine more precisely the conditions under which employment of children interferes with their physical, mental and social development, and the number of children so affected. There is need of much more publicity for facts already in hand and for the results of future research. There is need of open discussion with a fair hearing for both sides in order to offset misinformation and to guard against rushing into unwise "reform." There is need of social action either in support of officials charged with enforcement of existing child labor laws, or pressure in behalf of the proposed twentieth amendment, or both.

**Politics and Social Pathology.**—It has frequently been stated that the American people get as good government as



they deserve. However this may be, it is certain that the ignorance and indifference of citizens is responsible for the perpetuation of many of the conditions which menace health, income, personality and social solidarity. Whenever the citizens of the United States make up their minds to it, there is little doubt of their ability to eliminate a large proportion of poverty, sickness, race friction, international conflict and other elements in social maladjustment. The American people find a good deal of fault with their government, but make little effort to get at the root of the conditions about which they complain. They seem to be still in the "patent medicine stage" of civic development.

The spoils system is the key to many of our governmental defects. Men are appointed to office because they voted "right," because they belong to the American Legion or Ku Klux Klan, or because their ancestors came over in the *Mayflower*, but rather infrequently because they are competent to serve the people in the given capacity. "To the victors belong the spoils" means in practice the appointment of incompetent health officers, factory inspectors, institution heads, judges, police chiefs and teachers.

A third, and perhaps more fundamental, difficulty lies in the fact that our political units are usually arbitrarily defined. They do not often correspond to natural groupings of the population. Hence a genuine representative system is practically out of the question—there is really nothing to represent. So long as the residents of a political district do not constitute a social group, with common interests, traditions, sentiments and esprit de corps, there can be no true public opinion or vital leadership. It is the inclusion within a given district of utterly dissimilar groups and the division of coherent groups by running a political boundary through their midst which gives the boss his opportunity.

**Leisure Time in Relation to Maladjustment.**—The relation of "misused" leisure time to social maladjustments is less apparent, but no less real than that of defective education. The case studies we have included in this book have not been presented in such fashion as to bring out the uses

of leisure time. Neither have we examined any considerable body of data indicating the precise relations between spare-time activities and the break-down of individual and group morale. Indeed, there is great need of research in this field. Thus one might inquire into the significance for the family of the ways in which husband, wife and children spend their hours away from work and school. Is there any correlation between the fact that the members of the family often seek their recreation separately and the occurrence of divorce, desertion, juvenile delinquency or sex irregularities?

In another such study one might investigate the relations between the uses of spare time and economic status. To what extent are people of small means excluded from wholesome recreation? What forms of recreation are most profitable for people engaged in given types of work? Are they actually accessible? To what extent is it wise to occupy leisure time with night classes, correspondence courses and other means of vocational advancement?

The relations between spare-time activities and health also deserve careful study. What is the health value of various forms of recreation? What conditions in places of recreation are a menace to health and how can they be eliminated? What restrictions on the use of leisure time are set by various physical and mental handicaps?

One of the most valuable studies that has been made of the significance of spare time for the development of personality is the Cleveland Recreation Survey. One part of this survey was concerned with the way 124 juvenile delinquents and 20 adult offenders spent their spare time. Another part was devoted to the leisure-time activities of 160 "wholesome" citizens. The contrast between the two groups is very illuminating. The delinquents seemed to lack opportunities for wholesome recreation and spent much of their time in mere idleness—loafing on the streets, in pool halls, and bowling alleys, playing on railroad tracks, on dumps, in gullies and along the lake front. Among the "wholesome" citizens, on the other hand, outstanding forms of recreation were reading, organized games, dancing and



theater-going. In other words, among the delinquents there was a meager range of recreational pursuits, a preponderance of empty leisure and desultory activities, and the forming of casual and secret associations; while among the "wholesome" citizens there was found a widely extended and richly diversified range of activities, an insignificant proportion of desultory pursuits, but a large proportion of cases in which recreational habits were formed at the suggestion and under the guidance of parents, teachers, relatives and friends.

This study indicates that a community's recreation program will need to include: (1) education in the uses of leisure time, (2) providing adequate play places, equipment and supervision adapted to the needs of all elements in the population, (3) controlling commercial recreation—movies, burlesques, theaters, dance halls, skating rinks, pool halls, bowling alleys, recreation parks and bathing beaches.

Such studies as have been suggested and such a recreational program as that just indicated become increasingly important as the development of industrial society brings on minute subdivision of labor with monotonous repetition, reducing the flesh-and-blood worker to an automaton, eliminating intrinsic interest in the job, and producing fatigue not so much from muscular strain as from monotony of movement, close attention and noise. It is for these reasons that many industrial workers crave diversion and excitement rather than rest, which is the prime need of the persons who find joy in their work.

In a town dominated by automatic machinery, therefore, the educational problem is to train youth for the right use of leisure. . . . Education for leisure, under the conditions of automatic production, is education for life. The attendant of automatic tools does not live while he is on the job; he exists, against the time when he can begin to live which is when he leaves the shop. His task does not call for a fraction of his full powers as a sentient being, or monopolize his interest. . . . It is impossible for him to grow mentally through his work. So he comes to his post as a slave to the galley, and leaves it with the gladness of a convict escaping prison. Psychologists say that a large part of

industrial unrest is due to the inhibition which automatic tools place upon the expression of personality through labor. Be that as it may, the fact is, that the hours given to tending automatic machines are given to buy leisure; and in that leisure the operative lives. He lives in his sports, at the movies, at the prize fights, at the blind pig, as well as at the theatre, the lecture, the library, in the park, and on the front porch of his inamorata.”<sup>3</sup>

**Neighborhood and Community Disorganization.**—One hundred years ago most of the inhabitants of the United States lived in neighborhoods and communities whose population was small, homogeneous and relatively stable. Everyone knew everyone else, his business and his family history. There was much cooperative effort and mutual aid, for example, in harvesting, house building, and care of the sick. These American communities of a century ago were relatively isolated. Their members did not travel much and rather few strangers came to them. Living thus a life apart, each community was a relatively self-sufficing, well-knit social group. However, few American communities have attained the degree of isolation, permanence and cooperation found in medieval Europe and in modern peasant groups. These achieved and maintained a degree of unity of which there are few examples in the western world today.

Today the typical situation is one in which people live near together, but do not know each other; work together in some things while they quarrel or are indifferent in others; come and go with such frequency that permanent relationships are the exception rather than the rule. Both Europe and America have been changed by the industrial revolution, improved means of transportation and communication, popular education and migration. As a result we find the older neighborhood and community life rapidly disappearing, in spite of vigorous efforts to stem the tide.

What are some of the factors in this disintegration? One of the most significant is the development of economic antagonisms in these local areas. In general, there are two lines of division between the economic groups in a “com-

<sup>3</sup> Pound, Arthur, *The Iron Man in Industry*, p. 207.



munity," farmer *versus* merchant and banker, and wage earner *versus* merchant and manufacturer. In many localities these struggles are so intense and so bitter as to destroy the older cohesion and power of working together. Another divisive factor is the antagonism which develops between members of different races or nationalities. The presence in a city of immigrant colonies, often well-knit, independent, with distinct language, folkways and mores, is in itself an obstacle to unification of local interests and activities. When there is added to the physical separation a sense of hostility, an air of superiority on one side and resentment on the other, a community has ceased to exist. Likewise, the presence of white and black is apt to mean the existence side by side, in the same geographical area, of two distinct communities.

Another factor in the division of local populations is religious antagonism. We have today Christian *versus* Jew, Catholic *versus* Protestant, evangelical *versus* non-evangelical, fundamentalist *versus* modernist, denomination *versus* denomination. In rural districts we find denominations closely related theologically spending home missionary money to maintain struggling, competing churches. In both city and country we find powerful organizations seeking to rekindle the fires of sectarian conflict which had died down somewhat before the War.

The conflict of religious groups is not merely a matter of rival interests among the local people; it is in part a product of the interference of outside agencies. This same interference appears in the fields of social work and public health. A host of national and state-wide agencies descend upon the people trying to "sell" them overlapping and mutually incompatible programs of "uplift." These competing agencies often attract to themselves rival cliques and through the outside stimulation may help to intensify and perpetuate local antagonisms.

An interesting study of neighborhood and community disorganization could be made from the standpoint of mobility. Mobility implies not only physical coming and going, but also a wide and varying range of contacts by

whatever means they may be effected. A high mobility is manifested by rapid growth or decline of population, much migration into, out of, or within the local district, frequent changes of jobs, attachment to numerous local sub-groups and institutions, membership in outside organizations, and the multiplication of contacts through books, magazines, newspapers, moving pictures, radio, etc. High mobility involves diffusion of the interests of the individual person, so that each inhabitant of a local area may have a distinctive set of associations.

Another important study of neighborhood and community disorganization would be an examination of the influence upon the spirit and practice of team-work within a local area of such activities and institutions as the newspaper, "classification clubs," municipal and county government, chamber of commerce, consumers' cooperation "Americanization," city-planning, "community church," "community chest," "community club," and "community council."

In all this it is important to search for the relation between the disorganization of neighborhoods and communities on the one hand and the demoralization of individual persons on the other. It is pretty certain that they do not always go together. Nor is it unlikely that the disintegration of particular local groups may be for the best interests of the people concerned. Perhaps, as at Halifax, disorganization may be the preface to a renewal of local community life.

There are numerous other aspects of neighborhood and community disorganization which deserve careful study. Among them are the differences between the break-down of neighborhoods, which are primary groups, and of communities, which are based on secondary relationships. Another is the relation of all those problems dealt with in this book—break-down of family, economic organization and health—to the effective functioning of neighborhoods and local communities. A third study would consider the difficulties which arise out of the fact that our political units usually do not correspond with natural groupings of the



population. This would include an interpretation of the obstacles to the development of public opinion and to the substitution of real leaders for "bosses."

**Migration.**—Migration was formerly a movement of whole communities, sects or tribes; now it is a movement of individuals or, at most, parts of communities. Formerly it required the readjustment of folkways to new physical surroundings and to new adjacent groups. Ordinarily it put no very great strain on the individual person. Now a more or less complete change in the individual's life-organization is made necessary.

If he moves from country to city, he must learn to use new sanitary facilities and new means of transportation, to live in small quarters in close proximity to other people who are likely to be complete strangers. He must usually find a new occupation or at least continue the old one under very different conditions, such as working in a large group and being known by a number instead of by his first name. He may have to face the question of whether he shall join a union. In the country he probably lived in a neighborhood, where the intimacy of the primary group played a large part in his whole scheme of life. His conduct was largely governed by the mores of the group; unwittingly he looked to the group for guidance; in it he found refuge. But in the city he is not likely to find such a neighborhood into which he can fit, partly because there are relatively few real neighborhoods in our cities, and partly because he is different from city folks. Hence he becomes a more or less detached person, knowing many people casually and few intimately. He comes into contact with varied folkways and mores. His old absolutistic standards of right and wrong are often shaken; he may lose faith in his religion. Moreover, in the city it is easy to lead "a double life" because the city is a "mosaic of little worlds" each of which exists quite apart from the others. Under these circumstances it is little wonder that the rural person sometimes "goes to pieces," becomes demoralized, in the city. The wonder is rather that so many pass successfully through the period of unadjustment and so soon find a place for them-

selves in the urban situation. When the move is from one climate to another, as from Mississippi to Michigan, there is another set of adjustments to be effected. These are not, however, so likely to produce social maladjustment unless complicated by other changes such as those from rural to urban or European to American ways of living.

The greatest difficulties in migration are probably met by the people who move from one country to another in which language, economic organization, political system, legal machinery, customs, moral codes, traditions and, in fact, practically the whole social organization and its accompanying culture are different. Obviously such wholesale changes will disturb the entire life-organization of the migrant. Some of these adjustments will be facilitated by recognition of their necessity before leaving the old country. Others will be especially difficult because they will take the migrant by surprise.

In the case of the European peasant who comes to America, the unadjustment, which so easily becomes maladjustment, is complicated by being not only a change from one country to another, but also a change from country to city. Among the unpleasant surprises in store for the new-comer are his loss of status—here he is a “greenhorn” “dago,” “hunky,” or “sheeny”—the pressure to hurry up and be “Americanized,” the exploitation even at the hands of his own fellow-countrymen who have been longer in the United States, the loss of family solidarity when children come to regard their parents as “foreigners.”

The significance of migration for the community is less clearly defined. If those who go away send back glowing accounts of their superior opportunities and achievements a spirit of unrest may develop. If a large proportion of the young and vigorous leave, those who remain behind may stagnate. If some of the wanderers return they may bring back new customs which shock many of the stay-at-homes and perhaps cause a division in the community. For the community to which the migrants come there is the problem of defining its attitudes toward the strangers, “pigeon-holing” them, as it were. If it finds them de-



sirable additions, it must devise some program either for fitting them in as a subordinate caste or for assimilating them. Neither is likely to prove an easy task, especially if the immigrants come in considerable numbers.

**Race Relations.**—From the standpoint of the community, difficulties arise whenever there are present members of distinct races between whom there is serious friction. Manifestations of such friction are: (1) the race riots of recent years in Chicago, Tulsa, Washington, St. Louis Springfield and other American cities; (2) lynchings, which are happily decreasing in frequency; (3) bombing of negro homes in northern cities; (4) segregation as to residence districts, schools, churches, theaters, seats in public conveyances, etc.; (5) exclusion from trade unions; (6) alien land laws in western states; (7) sensational headlines in the jingoistic press of America and Japan. All these mean that members of the white race usually do not live happily in close proximity to negroes and orientals.

One outstanding center of trouble is the disintegrating area which usually surrounds the main business district of a large city. Here once lived the "best families," but with the expansion of the area occupied by offices, stores, garages, etc., they move farther out, leaving their houses to be rented for whatever they can get until the rising land values reach a point which justifies tearing down the house and erecting a business structure or selling at an advance. Meanwhile the fewest possible repairs are made on the house, because it is only a question of time until it will be torn down to make way for business. Hence rents may be relatively low. The owners, having removed from the district, take little interest in the personnel of the tenants. Therefore it is not uncommon to find in such a disintegrating area members of various races and nationalities, especially those who have newly come to the city. Moreover, because there is no longer any inhibiting neighborhood sentiment, prostitutes, gamblers, bootleggers and others of their ilk often find it convenient to establish their resorts in this section. Here then the poorest and the mean-

est of various races meet under the worst possible surroundings. Out of such conditions trouble naturally arises.

For the individual member of a minority race there are numerous handicaps which may be well-nigh insuperable. Not only is he isolated from those whose skin is of a different color than his own. He is usually forced to accept inferior living accommodations, schools, hospitals, railway cars, theaters, etc. If he be a man of ability and ambition, he may be distressed by the obstacles to securing a professional education, and by the refusal of recognition for his achievements. If he be a skilled laborer, he may find it exceedingly difficult to secure employment because of exclusion from trade unions. Whether skilled or not he will often have to be content with lower wages than those paid to white men. If he be a tenant farmer, he may be kept in a state of virtual peonage by the manipulation of his account in the owner's books.

As a reaction against such treatment from the white race, the colored peoples, black, brown and yellow, are manifesting a growing resentment. The Japanese have made it pretty plain that they will not tolerate this discrimination any longer than they have to. The American negroes, especially the northern mulattoes, are showing more and more disposition to fight for their "rights." There is appearing something very like a nationalist movement among them. These conflicts between individuals and groups of different races produce trouble locally, nationally and internationally. Were there not counter-movements directed toward race adjustment, we might well join those who offer gloomy forebodings for the future of western civilization. It is not that there is evidence of the inherent inferiority of the colored races; it is rather that inter-racial conflict, given modern devices for destruction, is a menace to everyone no matter what the color of his skin.

The checking or sublimating of conflicts between the races must rest upon an understanding and control of race prejudice. Because this is so widespread and so bound up with the emotions, the task will not be easy. So far as we



are aware, no one has given a really adequate account of the origin and nature of race prejudice. Until that is done it seems rather futile to anticipate much progress toward the adjustment of race relations. Here is one of the most challenging of all social problems.

**War, the Great Destroyer.**—However much damage may have been done by inter-racial conflicts, it is probable that during the past two or three hundred years more human misery has come out of international struggles. The consequences of war may be stated in terms of what it does to the men in service, to their families, to cities near army encampments, to industry, to the war area and to the nations engaged.

When a man goes into military service he lives in barracks instead of a home, he loses his normal contacts with the other sex, he is subject to a discipline in which he cannot "talk back," for twenty-four hours instead of eight each day he is held to a routine; in other words, he has to change nearly all his habits of living. To men of any independence in civilian life the arbitrary subordination is particularly galling. To those who are especially dependent upon their primary groups for "moral support" the detachment is almost certainly damaging to personality. After discharge there is another period of unadjustment, during which many men find it difficult to settle down to steady work and participation in the orderly life of the community. All this is in addition to the obvious menace to life and limb.

The families of men in service are deprived of income, lose the personal influence of husband, father or older brother, and live for an indefinite period in a state of worry and uncertainty. In case the man does not return, the family experiences those trials which accompany widowhood and orphanage.

To the cities near army encampments there is brought a host of young unmarried men with the attitude of "eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die." This arouses an abnormal state of excitement, especially among adoles-

cent girls. It stimulates both sentimentality and commercialism in the local population. It draws in a horde of exploiters including gamblers and prostitutes.

War always means more or less disruption of industry. It takes away part of the labor force and compels the use of substitutes, frequently women and children. This stimulates unrest both during and after the war. Many establishments must give up the making of their ordinary products and devote themselves to the manufacture of munitions of war. When peace comes they must change back again. Both shifts are likely to be disorganizing. The great need of the nation affords an opportunity for profiteering. The increase in nominal wages rarely offsets the rise in cost of living; it also is a subject of dispute during the deflation which follows the cessation of hostilities.

The most immediate and most obvious losses are those of the war area. There is the destruction of life and property, the driving people out as refugees, the breaking up of all social organization and general demoralization.

In general terms the losses of the nations engaged are physical, economic and moral. The physical costs of the World War have been estimated to reach the following enormous totals.<sup>4</sup>

10,000,000	Known dead soldiers
3,000,000	Presumed dead soldiers
13,000,000	Dead civilians
20,000,000	Wounded
3,000,000	Prisoners
9,000,000	War orphans
5,000,000	War widows
10,000,000	Refugees

Professor Bogart has estimated the economic costs of the War in the following terms.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Page, Kirby, *War, Its Causes, Consequences and Cure*, p. 38.

<sup>5</sup> Quoted by Page, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-40.



SUMMARY OF MATERIAL LOSSES OF THE WAR

Direct costs to the allies ...	\$126,000,000,000	
Direct costs to the central powers .....	60,000,000,000	
Total direct costs ...		\$186,000,000,000
Capitalized value of lives lost	67,000,000,000	
Property losses .....	37,000,000,000	
Loss of production .....	45,000,000,000	
War relief .....	1,000,000,000	
Loss to neutrals .....	2,000,000,000	
Total indirect costs..		152,000,000,000
Grand total costs of the War		\$338,000,000,000

“Truth is the first great casualty of war,” someone has said. Deceit and falsehood are part of the technique of carrying on war. Governments seek to mislead not only the enemy, but their own people as well. Freedom of speech, press and even of opinion are suppressed. Every one is put at the mercy of the “patrioteer.” The populace is accustomed to acts of violence, and the value of human life is lowered. Hating becomes a habit which continues after the war is over. Interest is for a long time diverted from constructive to destructive activities.

To explain why modern people engage in such colossal stupidity as modern warfare is one of the responsibilities of social science. No explanation yet offered, neither political, economic, psychological nor biological, has yet provided a sure basis on which to build a future of peace. A real understanding of the causes of war, of how to control the forces that produce it, awaits the development of a genuine science of collective behavior, which is the objective of sociologists.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### SOCIAL REORGANIZATION AND THE REMAKING OF PERSONALITY

**What is Social Pathology?**—Someone has said that for Sociology the most important question is, "Shall it be a science or a garbage can?" In bringing together within the covers of one volume such a variety of human ills as illegitimacy, unemployment, mental deficiency and all the rest, we may seem to have made of it a "garbage can." However, we trust that in the handling of these various problems our method has been at least a step toward scientific procedure, and we hope in this concluding chapter so to restate our problems that their interrelation may be plain.

While we have dealt with many different sorts of troubles that beset the human race—economic, physical, mental and moral—we have been concerned throughout with two problems: what is the relation of these conditions to personality, and what is their relation to social organization? If, therefore, we were to define the term Social Pathology it would be as the study of social disorganization and its correlate, personal demoralization. It is by no means certain that these two necessarily appear together, but they are found so frequently in the same situation that we strongly suspect there is an intimate connection between them.

Perhaps we can make our own viewpoint clearer by contrasting it with such a statement as this, that "social pathology should include in its scope all phenomena characterized by persistent deviation from normal function or condition."<sup>1</sup> We are by no means prepared to state what is a "normal" family, a "normal" amount of employment, a "normal" body or a "normal" mind. We are concerned

<sup>1</sup> Parsons, P. A., *An Introduction to Modern Social Problems*, p. 83.



with those situations in which people—as individuals, families, communities or states—are puzzled as to what they should do next, especially when this perplexity continues so long that it menaces the personality of the individual or the solidarity of the group. When, through failure to meet any difficulty, a person “goes to pieces” or a group loses its morale, then it not only fails to solve the problem in hand, but tends to lose the capacity to meet new situations as they appear. It is such a condition as this that we would describe as socially pathological.

It must have become apparent ere this that the chapter headings throughout this book refer not to independent problems, but to what are in fact only elements in complex social situations. Moreover, what appears at the outset to be the chief difficulty of a person, family or community is frequently only a minor factor in the real trouble. Let us recall a few of the instances already described.

When Mr. Mead first came to the northern city, he asked only for employment. But in the course of meeting this need, social workers discovered that he was a widower with six young children, that he had a crippled brother who was also a “mental case,” that neither of them had any skilled trade and both of them were poor managers. The oldest girl was ill prepared to meet the present situation in which the family found itself. She had never learned to cook or do housework, was a careless spender and made undesirable contacts in the rooming-house where they lived. Another child was a problem in school; he was reported to be inattentive, restless, stubborn, mischievous and often disobedient. All the children presented health problems.

When the Jaroslav family first came to the attention of a social agency all they asked was money to pay the rent until Mr. Jaroslav could find employment. In other words, their first request was not very different from that of the Meads'. But how different was their total situation. Although this Slovene family had been in the United States for twenty years, it was still unassimilated. Mr. Jaroslav had been injured when a coal miner and was now unable to do heavy work. The savings had been exhausted through

a period of unemployment. Mrs. Jaroslav for a time did double duty as janitress and housekeeper at home. As a consequence the children lacked supervision and the dietary was very inadequate—breakfast, for example, consisted of coffee and bread. The oldest daughter had a tubercular hip, was “boy struck” and at times hysterical. The oldest boy was badly crippled by “progressive muscular atrophy.” A third child was also crippled and apparently feeble-minded. Four other children were undernourished. The parents, because of their ignorance of hygiene and their suspicion of American ways, resisted all attempts to deal with the health problems of the family.

Similarly the disasters at Cherry and at Halifax did not descend upon previous “normal” communities, nor was the relief of immediate needs sufficient to overcome the unadjustments that followed. Thus Cherry, before the disaster, was described as “dirty, grimy and unkempt.” It had no town water supply, no lights or drainage; its streets were unpaved and its side-walks cinder paths. The population consisted largely of unassimilated immigrants. There were seventeen saloons for 1,500 people. There was no scheme of industrial accident insurance, although all the men were engaged in the hazardous occupation of coal mining. After the disaster the immediate problems were to provide the elemental needs of the survivors and to calm the women and children. Then came the further tasks of returning the boys and girls to school, providing guidance to take the place of that formerly given by the fathers, seeing that relief funds were used to the best advantage, and financing the rearing of families of young children.

Halifax before its disaster was described as a city “immobile, conservative and complacent,” with inadequate schools, recreational facilities and housing. Its voters were indifferent and there was little cooperation between the various elements in the population. After the disaster there was need not only for food, shelter and medical attention, but presently for rebuilding the destroyed portion of the city, making permanent provision for orphaned children and 600 blinded persons. There was developed a much



needed spirit of team-work which was effective in solving some of the problems of relief, social service, public health, recreation and education.

**Crisis and Unadjustment.**<sup>2</sup>—While it is probable that no one is ever completely adjusted to his environment, physical or social, still most of us devise or accept modes of behavior which enable us to get along much of the time without special difficulties. But into the life of every person and every group there come disturbances which interrupt the “even tenor of their ways.” Sometimes these “crises” are mild and easily met; at other times they are violent and baffling. But in either case something unusual or unforeseen happens; the old habits and customs are not adequate to deal with it. The person or the group sets feverishly to work to find a way out. It is not a case of spontaneous self-improvement, it is the old story of “necessity, the mother of invention.” Now the results of such a crisis are not necessarily either good or ill. They may involve: (1) a change of habits or customs which enables the person or group to “carry on” under the new conditions; (2) a series of changes which make possible achievements previously regarded as out of reach or not thought of at all; (3) the effecting of a temporary accommodation which leaves the future very much in doubt, but which does not seriously handicap the person or the group for the present; (4) failure so serious that the morale of the person or group may be menaced or life itself endangered.

The stories of “Christy” Mathewson and Ruth Gaines are examples of the first type of situation. “Christy” Mathewson, when stricken by tuberculosis, not only accepted the program of rest, fresh air and special diet essential to recovery, but after regaining strength changed his scheme of life so as to prevent the disease from getting a new start. In all his activities he “took it easy”; he gave up playing baseball and became a manager. Ruth Gaines,

<sup>2</sup> For aid in formulating the point of view presented in this section we are especially indebted to Thomas, W. I., *Source Book for Social Origins*, especially pp. 16-22.

after a trying experience as an unmarried mother, was reinstated in her home community and was later happily married.

Laura Bridgman and Helen Keller were also enabled to effect relatively successful accommodations. Whether their experience should be classed in the first or second type of situations depends on whether one's attention be centered on their possibilities before the loss of sight and hearing or on their condition after that occurred. Laura Bridgman, a victim of scarlet fever, lost sight, hearing, speech and perhaps smell. Life for several years was very difficult, but through unusual training she learned to get along with other people under a limited range of circumstances. Helen Keller, who lost sight, hearing and speech through some other disease of early childhood, became almost unmanageable. She was "difficult" as well as "defective." But through a still more remarkable course of education and training she was enabled to participate to a large extent in the life about her.

There are no clear-cut cases in this book in which a crisis was followed by achievements previously regarded as out of reach or not thought of at all. One which approaches this type, however, is that of Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, who had become estranged from each other and were being exploited by loan sharks. After their difficulties were straightened out, they not only recovered their lost status, but rose to a higher plane of living. Mrs. Johnson told a social worker she felt they "were just beginning to live." The aftermath of the Halifax disaster seems also to justify placing that incident in this category. Halifax rose from its ashes a modern city with improved transportation, business, housing, schools, recreation and civic spirit.

If we have not cited many instances of complete adjustment in the face of a crisis, it is because our concern in this book is precisely with the failure to effect successful accommodations. It is for this same reason that most of the case summaries we have included are examples of, at best, temporary or otherwise imperfect adjustments. Such an instance of "unstable equilibrium" is that achieved by



Kenneth McGregor—described as “retarded in school, a truant, liar and petty thief”—who got along all right under especially favorable school conditions, but concerning whom it was reported, “If he gets back into ordinary school routine, he will be likely to drop back into his old ways. The chances are that as he grows older he will, in that case, keep out of the reach of the law as most such do.”<sup>3</sup> Another instance is that of Mrs. Newton who with her two small children was deserted and left without any means of support. The attempted solutions included the arrest of Mr. Newton, “stay-away” probation and a court order to pay \$40 a month to his family. Mrs. Newton went to work in a laundry and put the children in a day nursery. But the failure of these attempted adjustments is indicated by the fact that the man does not stay away or make regular payments. Moreover, his mental condition, which is evidently serious, is not receiving any attention. However, the family is undoubtedly better off than when he lived “at home.”

The principal crisis in the life of Mary Wilson Haynes Baker involved the non-support and later desertion of Mr. Haynes. Her attempts at accommodation included divorce and remarriage. But the limited degree of her success is indicated by the fact that she really did not love Mr. Baker—she married him to secure a home for herself and baby—and the two had numerous misunderstandings over financial matters.

With the Lees the inadequately met crisis was a combination of old age, absence of near relatives willing to assist them and the exhaustion of savings through extended illnesses. In the effort to meet this situation they sought to secure a congressional grant; friends made many gifts and tried to have them admitted to an old folks’ home; a family welfare society rendered personal service and financial aid; a county pension was granted for a time; and finally they went to the almshouse. By these various means they were provided with food and shelter, they spent their declining days together and they avoided pauper burial. Beyond this

<sup>3</sup> Morrison, Henry C., in *Three Problem Children*, p. 126.

little was achieved. The inadequacy of the accommodation is further shown by the fact that neither Mr. nor Mrs. Lee was ever satisfied with the arrangements made.

**Maladjustment as Chronic Unadjustment.**<sup>4</sup>—We turn now to a group of cases in which there was chronic failure to effect adjustments, involving personal demoralization, family disintegration, and a constant menace to the larger social order. These display in most obvious and clear-cut fashion the conditions which may properly be described as socially pathological.

We do not know what started the Field family on its wanderings, but whatever the "original" crisis may have been, their nomadic life was apparently part of their own attempt at accommodation. How much satisfaction they derived from mere traveling we do not know, but they seemed to be driven on and on, never finding contentment, but all the while interfering with the health and education of their children and engendering habits of lying and begging. Social workers made desultory attempts to get the children into school and stop the peddling of "hand-made" lace, but so far as we know no systematic effort was ever made to bring the family under control.

The principal crisis in Mr. White's life was the loss of his sight in an industrial accident. His efforts on his own behalf included a damage suit against his employer and later peddling and begging. One social agency set him up in business, starting a booth outside a large factory, and another agency offered re-education. The business failed because Mr. White had come to prefer loafing and begging to regular work. He rejected the opportunity for re-education, refused to accept advice, and regarded aid as his just due. His wife also became demoralized, refused to work, and lied in order to receive help from several sources. Both engaged in tirades against the social workers and society in general. The oldest boy dropped out of school in order to go about with his father, presently be-

<sup>4</sup> For aid in formulating the point of view presented in this section we are especially indebted to Lindeman, E. C., *What is Maladjustment?* Survey, 51: 189-190.



came an irregular worker, engaged in stealing and probably gambling. He was sent to an industrial school and upon release enlisted in the army. Our latest word is that he has been convicted of robbing a grocery store.

Andrew Mead was crippled as a result of jumping on trains. He lived in turn with his older brothers and sisters, helped about their homes, and secured various odd jobs. He spent six months in a hospital where an operation was performed on his hip. He was helped by a state rehabilitation agent. But even while his physical condition was being improved he was deteriorating mentally. He attempted suicide, stole his brother's rent money, got drunk, falsely accused his niece of being pregnant, forgot where he lived and finally disappeared.

How trouble started in the Mathews family no one knows, but when Mr. Mathews came to a social agency asking for help, he told a "wild yarn" about his wife dying at the Union Station, and wanted to place his children in an institution. Since he refused to meet the requirements of the orphanage to which he was referred, he disappeared. After two years he came back again asking help for his sick "wife" and child. It was difficult to make a social diagnosis because of the man's persistent lying, but it was presently discovered that he was mentally unbalanced and that every member of the family had syphilis. It was believed that the man's lying and wandering were forms of wish fulfillment. All four of the children were given some medical attention; two of them were made wards of the juvenile court and placed in an institution. There was no real diagnosis or treatment of the man's mental trouble; the syphilis was not cured; financial stability was not attained. Finally the woman ran off with another man, taking her little girl along; and Mr. Mathews disappeared with his oldest boy.

Mr. Thompson presumably first used morphine by doctor's prescription during a serious illness. In any case he became addicted to the use of the drug and now cannot live without it. His wife also appears to be an addict. Neither is able to earn a living. Mrs. Thompson is a wretched

housekeeper. Material relief has been given and many attempts have been made to improve their home conditions, but so far as we can see nothing constructive has been accomplished.

Each of these five instances is a clear case of chronic unadjustment, involving personal demoralization, family disintegration and a menace to the community. Each is an example of social failure.

**Isolation and Maladjustment.**<sup>5</sup>—Another point of view from which it seems profitable to undertake the interpretation of social maladjustments is that of isolation. Now by isolation we do not mean necessarily geographical separation, but any interference with social intercourse. In the situations we have examined some of the factors in social isolation are poverty, ignorance, fatigue, sickness, physical disability, mental disease, feeble-mindedness and sex irregularity. Poverty, as we have repeatedly seen, shuts people out from participating in many social activities. It interrupts schooling, it excludes people from certain contacts because they cannot afford the proper clothes, have no money to entertain, to attend lectures and concerts or to travel.

Social intercourse may be restricted by one's physical condition in several ways. If he lacks energy because of fatigue or a specific disease, like tuberculosis, he cannot come and go as he would like. If he is crippled, if his vision or hearing is defective or gone, he is cut off from a multitude of possible contacts. If he is growing old, he may find his greatest tragedy in the loss of "normal" human relationships. If he is mentally sick or feeble-minded, he is obviously unable to share in certain group experiences quite aside from the forcible segregation which may be thrust upon him.

Those whose conduct is markedly different from that sanctioned by the mores of their groups are ostracized in

<sup>5</sup> The significance of isolation was first brought home to us by W. I. Thomas. The most adequate statement of the matter we have found is in Park, R. E., and Burgess, E. W., *An Introduction to the Science of Sociology*, Chap. IV.



various ways. The unmarried mother is isolated by averted faces, gossip and public condemnation. The known prostitute accepts her exclusion from "good society," though she may be intimate with some of its leading members. The hobo, the tramp and the bum are outcasts from all but a restricted circle. Criminals of various degrees are segregated not merely during imprisonment, but afterwards by their designation as "jail birds" or "ex-cons."

But while isolation may impose handicaps, it need not involve personal maladjustment unless one recognizes that he is cut off from desirable contacts and struggles without success to overcome the barriers. Under these conditions there is apt to appear a spirit of bitterness and resentment or a sense of inferiority and balked desires. Thus Virginia Jenkins was sensitive about accepting invitations from her school and Sunday-school friends, partly because she was ashamed to entertain them in her poorly furnished home and partly because she was very conscious of her amputated thumb.

Helen Keller describes a typical experience of her childhood days in these words. "Sometimes I stood between two persons who were conversing and touched their lips. I could not understand and was vexed. I moved my lips and gesticulated frantically without result. This made me so angry at times that I kicked and screamed until I was exhausted."\*

How much the Capodanno and Jaroslav families were distressed by their exclusion from American society we do not know, but Mr. Capodanno seems to have felt the prejudice against "dagoes" very keenly. His wife, on the other hand, seems to have been quite unconcerned and could see no reason for trying to learn English. Both Mr. and Mrs. Jaroslav learned English, but clung to most of their Slovene folkways. Their oldest daughter, too, after a brief period of trying to adopt the ways of American girls, settled back into the customs of her people. On the whole, it seems fair to say that neither of these families was worried about its

\* Keller, Helen, *The Story of My Life*, p. 10.

relative isolation. Hence from their standpoint this was not a factor in the maladjustment.

But the presence of such isolated families in a city or rural district is a symptom of social disorganization. One of the reasons our cities are not able to act with unity and vigor in promoting the common welfare is the inclusion in their population of detached individuals and non-cooperating groups. However satisfied these isolated folk may be with their own situation, their presence is an obstacle to real community life. While they live thus socially distant, though physically near, there can be no true community spirit. As a consequence it is difficult to create and maintain effective local institutions of government, education, recreation, religion, etc.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, such isolated persons may be foci of physical and moral infection, and so limited in their ability to make adjustments that they are likely in any new crisis to become a burden upon the community.

**Competition and Maladjustment.**<sup>8</sup>—Competition is related in a two-fold way to maladjustment. On the one hand, it tends to produce segregation and impose handicaps of various kinds. On the other hand, segregation and these various handicaps may interfere with success in future competition. Those who for any reason fail in the competitive struggle tend to be segregated into groups of their kind. We noted in a previous chapter how this happens in the case of the blind. But much the same sort of thing happens to all “underprivileged” folk. It is well known that people on various economic levels are segregated as to residence districts in our cities, the very poorest being pushed into “slums.”

The story of the Calkins brothers illustrates the same process of segregation at work among the mentally defective. The ancestors of these men were for five generations squatters in the hills of New York State, whither they had

<sup>7</sup> This has been concretely demonstrated by McKenzie, R. D., *The Neighborhood: a study of local life in the city of Columbus, Ohio*, Am. Jour. Soc., 27: 145 ff.

<sup>8</sup> For aid in formulating the point of view presented in this section we are especially indebted to Park and Burgess, *op. cit.*, Chap. VIII.



been pushed by the increasing competition of the lowlands. They seemed unable to engage in any but a few simple occupations from which they made a rather precarious living. Their idleness and drunkenness became notorious. This reputation combined with their bedraggled appearance and uncouth speech, caused them to be avoided and looked down upon. As children they were ostracized by their school-mates. Hence they soon dropped out of school, usually without learning to read. They knew nothing of books, theaters or concerts and little of magazines or newspapers. They refrained from attending parties, dances, picnics, or neighborhood gatherings of any kind. As a natural consequence, they had few contacts outside their own poor kinship circle. Once established, this segregation probably operated quite as effectively as their poor native ability to handicap them economically.

But segregation of groups, like the isolation of individuals, need involve no maladjustment to the ones immediately concerned, unless they are aware of their exclusion and seek to break it down. If they presently break through the barriers, the period of unadjustment is merely a step toward greater achievement. But if they strive persistently and in vain, the unadjustment becomes chronic, that is, maladjustment. Moreover, the segregation of groups within the community or state may present even more serious dangers to the larger society than does the isolation of individuals. So we observe that so-called "free" competition has tended to create a distinct laboring class, a proletariat, cut off from the opportunity ever to become anything but laborers by the day or week. Some of the restrictions imposed upon wage earners by laissez-faire economics and "free" competition have been suggested in our discussion of low wages, irregular work, business depressions, child labor, employment of women, long hours and industrial accidents.

The handicaps imposed—whether by previous failure in the economic world, by broken health, by family disintegration, or by community disorganization—are almost certain obstacles to successful participation in the competition

of the future. "To him that hath shall be given and from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath," is by no means a figure of speech. People of small means are subject to all sorts of exploitation by employers, landlords and merchants. They cannot purchase the food, medical attention, vacations and vocational training needed to strengthen them for the competitive struggle.

Likewise it is not hard to understand how tuberculosis and heart disease limit earning power and the satisfaction of various human wants. Syphilis tends to impose a permanent handicap. Pneumonia, typhoid fever, diphtheria and other acute diseases may not interfere with social and economic activity for a long period. But sometimes there are physical after-effects which are serious. Very frequently there is a stoppage of income, exhaustion of savings and accumulation of debts.

Finally, broken homes impose handicaps upon many persons who at best would find competition severe. The woman who is left a widow or deserted with small children usually has a long, hard struggle ahead. The child without parental care is likely to find life more difficult than do other boys and girls. The unmarried mother and her child face an especially hostile world. Casual laborers are commonly mistreated with impunity by employers and police. The breakdown of primary groups and the detachment of individual persons reduces the chances of their successful participation in the competitive struggle.

Thus competition, which in itself is a perfectly natural and inevitable process, bears a two-fold relation to social maladjustment. On the one hand, competition that is unrestricted handicaps many individuals and tends to segregate them into groups of underprivileged folk. On the other hand, ability to compete successfully is restricted by precisely these handicaps and segregation.

**Conflict and Social Disorganization.**<sup>9</sup>—A distinction is sometimes made between competition, as a process that is

<sup>9</sup> For statements of this in relation to delinquency see Queen, Stuart A., *Passing of the County Jail*, p. 108 ff.; Van Waters, Miriam, *Youth in Conflict*.



impersonal and frequently "unconscious," and conflict, as a process that is decidedly personal and "conscious." How appropriate this use of terms may be we are not sure, but there is certainly a difference between such processes as the general "struggle for existence" and the clash of two sects, political parties, nations or races, although the one type merges by imperceptible degrees into the other.

Speaking generally, there are three forms of conflict: (1) between groups, (2) between persons, (3) between the wishes of the individual person. Conflict of the first type may draw the members of a group more closely together. The welfare of each one becomes important for the strengthening of the whole. The individual in turn feels his personality expand in conscious identification with his group. He thrills with release from inhibitions, with the freedom to do all he can to the common foe. If success attends the struggle, there may be further enhancement of self-importance, along with greater security. But for every victor there is a loser. Moreover, the excitement of conflict may produce habits and attitudes later harmful to the winning group. If the "hundred per-center" no longer has Germans to hate and foreign spies to hunt, he may turn his malevolence upon his fellow-citizens of different color or religion.

It is when conflict is between members of the same group or between sub-groups within a larger social unit that maladjustment appears. The pitting of boys' gangs against the police, of trade unions against employers' associations, of Protestant against Catholic, of white against black—these are situations in which communities and states lose their vitality. The confusion of mores which appears in such conflicts as these is demoralizing to the individual person. Action that is praiseworthy when directed against a hostile group is condemned when turned upon one's comrades. But it is not always easy to tell who are one's comrades. The lines that divide religious, economic and racial groups cross and intercross. What wonder that many people feel that anything is all right "if you can get away with it."

Conflict between persons led up to the divorce of John and Mary Haynes, the desertion of Mr. Newton, the truancy of Joe Pastor. Norman and Richards, the "fake" veterans, were carrying on a lively contest with organized society and apparently getting the best of it. Mr. Mathews and Mr. White were playing a similar game, but with the odds more against them. The Johnsons were engaged in a struggle with the loan sharks. The demoralizing feature of all these personal contests is the fact that they were conducted without any accepted rules. There was no common ground on which the contestants could agree. There was always an outside authority to which they might appeal, but this was not equally acceptable to both parties. Thus Mary Haynes turned to the divorce court, which disgusted John. The juvenile court was Mrs. Newton's refuge and the bane of her husband's life. Joe Pastor's teacher passed him on to principal, superintendent, truant officer and court, but Joe had a hard time reconciling himself to these constituted authorities. Had Norman and Richards been ex-service men with legitimate claims for compensation, they could have turned to the Veterans' Bureau for help. Being "frauds," they pitted their wits against those of the people from whom they begged and stole. Similarly Mr. Mathews and Mr. White evaded those who wanted to help meet their real needs. The Johnsons welcomed the intervention of social agencies, but the same can hardly be said of their exploiters.

There are numerous theories of those well-springs of action that lie within the individual. They are variously stated in terms of instincts, impulses, interests, desires and wishes. But the concrete facts of inner conflict are not fundamentally changed by the adoption of any of these interpretations. Hence without entering into any debate as to the relative merits of the various theories, we have chosen the statement in terms of wishes as developed by W. I. Thomas.<sup>10</sup> He classifies these inner forces under four heads: (1) the wish for new experience, as manifested commonly in games and adventure, (2) the wish for

<sup>10</sup> Thomas, W. I., *The Unadjusted Girl*, Chap. I.



security, which implies caution, conservatism and the avoidance of danger, (3) the wish for recognition, social standing, distinction in the eyes of the public, (4) the wish for response, a craving for the intimate appreciation of individuals, as manifested in love between the sexes or between parents and children.

Conflict between the wishes of the person is apparent in the case of Mr. Mathews, who was evidently torn between his sex impulse (wish for response, in Thomas' classification) and his desire to stand well in the eyes of other people (wish for recognition). Also his nomadic life (an expression of the wish for new experience) made it impossible for him to have a steady income (fulfillment of the wish for security).

Mr. Lee never quite gave up hope of receiving a congressional grant on account of the services of his wife's revolutionary ancestor. This would have given him something to boast about (recognition) and left him free to order his own affairs (new experience), as well as provided the necessities of life (security) and enabled him to spend his declining years with his wife (response). Naturally it was hard to give up this splendid hope, even after everyone else realized that it would never come true. It was with very great reluctance that he accepted the meager hospitality of the almshouse for himself and Mrs. Lee (security and response), giving up the expectation of immediate aid from Congress (recognition and new experience).

Mrs. Jenkins apparently found it hard to reconcile her desires to manage her own affairs (evidently a new experience) and to stand well in the community (recognition) with the fact that her own and her children's well-being (security) would have been greatly advanced by accepting the advice of the Family Welfare Society. Her erratic conduct in accepting and then rejecting free legal aid, in agreeing and then refusing to take the children to a clinic, in grumbling about the groceries or clothing given her, in rapid shifting from job to job, and in her emotional outbursts, are evidence of this inner conflict. So long as it was unresolved she was unadjusted, if not maladjusted. She

was divided within herself and out of sorts with the community. She was practically demoralized.

Thus social readjustment requires accommodation either between the wishes of the individual person, between rival persons, or between warring groups. Indeed, it very often involves a combination of these.

**Readjustment or Accommodation.**—We have already pointed out that a crisis may be followed by: (1) a successful accommodation to the new conditions so that the life of the person or group may continue much as before; (2) a reorganization of habits and customs which makes possible achievements previously regarded as out of reach or not thought of at all; (3) a temporary or partial accommodation, which gets over the immediate difficulty, but leaves matters in a state of “unstable equilibrium”; (4) failure to effect any accommodation at all, with a consequent loss of power to meet future crises.

Thomas<sup>11</sup> has pointed out that the chief factors which enter into a group's success in making new adjustments are: (1) “the presence of extraordinary individuals,” men with ability to think through the crisis and with prestige to command the confidence of their fellows; (2) “the level of culture,” including the body of knowledge and material resources; (3) “the character of the ideas by which the group-mind is prepossessed,” for example, pride in permanence or pursuit of the novel, to which might be added (4) the relation to other groups which may render assistance or take advantage of the situation—allies or enemies. Closely akin to these are the traits which affect the individual's chances of meeting a crisis successfully. Among these may be mentioned: (1) native ability, (2) general education and special training, (3) resources available to help him, and (4) his attitude toward these resources.

It is interesting to re-examine the history of Cherry and of Halifax with these hypotheses in mind. It seems pretty plain that the Canadian city had more “extraordinary individuals” among its inhabitants and a higher level of culture than did the Illinois mining town. In addition, the

<sup>11</sup> Thomas, W. I., *Source Book for Social Origins*, pp. 19-22.



people of Halifax were a homogeneous group with considerable pride in their common history, while the people of Cherry were brought together from many countries in the search for a job at their common trade, coal-mining. There is little doubt that these factors are at least partly responsible for the social and economic revival which followed the disaster in Halifax, while no such development seems to have occurred in Cherry.

The contrast between the accommodations effected by "Christy" Mathewson and by Mr. Walters bears out our hypotheses even more strikingly. About their native ability we have no definite information. But Mathewson was a college man, while Walters had been to school very little. Mathewson not only had a "profession," baseball, but had acquired self-discipline, while Walters was unskilled and undisciplined. Mathewson had money and an unusually capable wife, while Walters was practically without resources of any kind except those provided by the Family Welfare Society and the Municipal Sanatorium. Finally, Mathewson "played the game" according to the rules laid down by the sanatorium staff, while Walters was hard to manage. The only difference in Walters' favor was the fact that with him the disease was not so far advanced. Hence it was arrested in spite of all the handicaps. But Mathewson is once more "on his feet" while Walters and his family hover perilously near the danger line.

Another contrast is that between the ways in which Ruth Gaines and Tantine met the crisis of extra-marital sex experience. Probably neither was of more than average ability; neither had much general education; both were ignorant concerning sex matters. But Ruth Gaines had established habits and attitudes on which she could rebuild her life, while Tantine plainly had no such character. Moreover, Ruth fell into the hands of competent social workers who helped her through her crisis, while Tantine fell into the hands of procurers, and bawdy-house proprietors. Both were frightened at first, but Ruth presently developed a wholesome attitude toward her situation, while Tantine seems not to have taken herself very seriously.

In some cases readjustment is achieved more or less independently, perhaps even in spite of the efforts of social workers, teachers, clergy and friends. In other cases it is quite dependent upon the receiving of skilled service from outside. The story of Joe Pastor is an instance of self-accommodation. To be sure, he received plenty of attention—physical, mental and social diagnosis, probation, disciplinary school, suspended sentence and placement on a farm. Perhaps these efforts accomplished more than we imagine. But it was not until after Joe returned from military service that he finally settled down to regular work and was satisfied with simple home life. Mr. and Mrs. Johnson, on the other hand, were drifting farther and farther apart, while their debts were steadily growing, until a trained social worker came to their rescue. She brought about a mutual understanding which paved the way to a happier family life and arranged the “refund-ing” of the debts on such terms that it was possible for the Johnsons to pay them off.

**The Remaking of Personality.**—The materials in this book have been assembled with the purpose of shedding light on the human problems of social maladjustment. Only incidentally has it been intended that they should display methods of social treatment. But since action, after all, is the goal of understanding, it seems important to describe briefly some of the processes of social work. Of the many varieties and sub-varieties of social service we shall consider only two main types, case work and group work.

“Social case work consists of those processes which develop personality through adjustments consciously effected, individual by individual, between men and their social environment.”<sup>12</sup> Miss Richmond amplifies this definition by analyzing social case work into four sorts of activities: (1) insight into individuality and personal characteristics, (2) insight into the resources, dangers and influence of the social environment, (3) direct action of mind upon mind, and (4) indirect action through the social environment.

<sup>12</sup> Richmond, Mary E., *What Is Social Case Work?* pp. 98-99.



The first two she has elsewhere described as social diagnosis which she defines as "the attempt to make as exact a definition as possible of the situation and personality of a human being in some social need—of his situation and personality, that is, in relation to other human beings upon whom he in any way depends or who depend upon him, and in relation also to the social institutions of his community."<sup>13</sup> To get at such a definition of the situation it is necessary not only to establish a contact with the "client," but to secure a great deal of information which he is unable to give about himself. This means consulting his immediate family, relatives, friends, physicians, clergy, employers, landlords, tradesmen, and in fact anyone who may be able to help the social worker to an understanding of the person in need. But it is not enough merely to collect information. The data in hand must be interpreted through critical comparison. Moreover, a social diagnosis is not something final, but must frequently be revised in the course of helping the person to meet new crises or to overcome obstacles present, but not discovered, at first.

Miss Richmond's third and fourth processes, which constitute social treatment in the narrower sense of the term, have been restated by Porter Lee as the leadership and the executive aspects of treatment.<sup>14</sup> These are illustrated by the case materials in preceding chapters. The "leadership" aspects of work with the Jenkins family included some "plain talks" with Mrs. Jenkins concerning her shortcomings, leaving her alone when she was in the midst of a "flare-up," and allowing her to have her own way in certain matters, thereby avoiding her antagonism in more important issues; urging Virginia to join the Campfire Girls and encouraging William to become a Boy Scout. The "executive" or indirect part of the task included giving financial aid; arranging for a mother's pension, medical attention, day nursery care, summer outings and employment; securing the cooperation of an attorney, parent-teacher association, school and church. As a result of these

<sup>13</sup> Richmond, Mary E., *Social Diagnosis*, p. 363.

<sup>14</sup> Lee, Porter R., *A Study of Social Treatment*, Family, 4: 191-199.

manifold efforts Mrs. Jenkins is a more stable, dependable person and a better manager, while her children are progressing nicely in school and other activities.

With Ruth Gaines personal influence was used in encouraging her to keep her baby and to return to her father. This was accomplished not through forcing the issue, but by seeing that she had plenty of time to think it over and to become attached to the child. The other services included the provision of care in a maternity hospital and convalescent home, inducing her father to take her back with the baby, and preparing the community for her return. The outcome was that Ruth was reinstated in home, church and community; later she happily married.

In dealing with the Johnsons there was no occasion for material relief, but the social worker did render an important service in arranging a new loan at a reasonable rate of interest. She also brought her personal influence to bear in a particularly helpful manner. She talked separately with the man and the woman, explaining them to each other. She advised Mrs. Johnson against going to work at night; she reminded Mr. Johnson of his family responsibilities and urged him to show his wife a little more attention. Not long after Mrs. Johnson said to the social worker that they "were just beginning to live."

Service to the Capodanno family included much material relief, and the arranging of medical service, summer outings and instruction in English. More directly the visitor from the Family Welfare Society tried to stimulate Mrs. Capodanno's interest in learning English and in further participation in American life. She also tried to teach this ignorant woman how to buy, cook and keep house. While the gains are rather meager, Mrs. Capodanno is now brighter, happier and actually following instructions concerning the children's health.

In dealing with the Walters family the "executive" aspect of treatment included arranging sanatorium care for the man, hospital care for his wife during confinement, health supervision for the children and material relief of various kinds. On the "leadership" side the case worker



encouraged Mrs. Walters to have the children help with the housework, urged the oldest boy to make garden and keep the yard clean, and held some "vigorous interviews" with Mr. Walters concerning his attitude toward the family. Recently Mrs. Walters told the visitor that "never in her life had she been so comfortable and felt so encouraged about the future." She is healthier, a better housekeeper and manager. The oldest boy is more contented in the home and ready to assume a larger share of responsibility. But Mr. Walters is still a problem.

We shall not undertake here to restate the processes which entered into the development of Helen Keller's personality, but urge the reading of Miss Sullivan's letters,<sup>15</sup> which constitute one of the most vivid narratives of this sort we have ever seen.

**Social Reorganization.**—The readjustment of individuals may sometimes be effected without important changes in the groups to which they belong. But the change of personality always involves some change in relations to other people, and sometimes it cannot be brought about without fundamental modifications in group life. Often the nature of the difficulties encountered emphasizes the need of different social arrangements—new laws, new institutions, new methods of administration.

The experiences of the Jenkins and White families and of the town of Cherry indicate clearly the need of industrial accident insurance and the introduction of safety measures. The hardships of the Allens, Mr. Burke and others point to the need of decasualizing industry through the efforts of private employers, long-time planning and distribution of public works, employment exchanges and unemployment insurance. The upheaval of the Nyack family and the strain on women in industry suggests the necessity of legislation restricting the hours of labor. Hardly a case that we have cited does not show the importance of raising the level of wages through the program of the trade unionists, of the cooperators, of the socialists, or of some other group.

<sup>15</sup> Keller. Helen, *The Story of My Life*, Part III.

Another need to which almost every record points is that of periodic medical examinations, improved and increased hospital and clinical facilities, group practice of medicine and health insurance. More specifically the accounts of the Jenkins, Mead, Capodanno and Jaroslav families indicate the importance and the possibilities of health services through the schools—examinations, medical advice and the teaching of hygiene. The stories of Mr. Walters and Mr. Thompson suggest the need of legal control of the uses of alcohol, opium and other narcotic drugs.

The history of the Calkins "tribe" and the story of Mary Lucca emphasize the vital importance of the discovery and supervision or segregation of the mentally defective. This in turn requires a continuing census, psychological clinics, increased institutional facilities, and special classes in the public schools. The trouble caused by Newton, Mathews, and Jamison makes plain the need of psychiatric clinics to identify and help those suffering from any nervous or mental disorder. Adequate treatment of this group also requires psychopathic hospitals and modernized state hospitals to take the place of "insane asylums." The stories of Kenneth McGregor and Joe Pastor suggest what can be accomplished toward the prevention of future trouble through child guidance and habit clinics.

The stories of these same boys point to the need of individualization in the school system through small classes, varied and flexible curriculum, visiting teachers, etc. All along we have seen the need of more adequate instruction in matters of sex and citizenship, preparation for family life and for earning a living. This means more study of the social sciences which contribute to an understanding of industry, government, race relations and the wide range of problems dealt with in this book. Finally, upon the school system must rest largely the responsibility for developing a scientific attitude toward life, in place of magic, prejudice and uncritical acceptance of authority.

As pointed out in the preceding chapter, all these problems call for the discovery of facts through research and honest news-gathering; the dissemination of facts through



the press, movies, radio, school and public platform; the discussion of facts in open forums; and social action based on the resulting public opinion.

In other words, the solution of the problems of social pathology requires not only the remaking of personality, but also the reorganization of the social order through an economic program, a health program, a mental hygiene program, an educational program, and a program for the making of public opinion. To a large extent these are all programs of education and legislation.





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